

Saipan Tribune



NEW LAWS

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Gov. Eloy S. Inos shares a light moment with lawmakers and other officials at the signing of three local laws and one public law on Capital Hill yesterday afternoon. Among the new laws include establishing the exit of the U.S. Post Office as an official customs point of entry.

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GOT A NEWS TIP?

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

Should periodic drug testing be made mandatory for all law enforcement personnel?

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INSIDE

OFFBEAT



A sculpture of Nelson Mandela has a tiny quirk: a rabbit inside one of its bronze ears.

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LIFE & STYLE



Wish Bruno Mars would write you a hit song? Keep dreaming.

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INOS, CALVO MEET WITH US PACIFIC COMMAND IN HAWAII

'No to artillery ranges'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

In his strongest statement to date on the U.S. military's proposed live-fire training ranges on Pagan and Tinian, Gov. Eloy S. Inos said yesterday he will not support artillery ranges on both islands for safety reasons and pointed out that Pagan alone is an "uphill battle."

Tinian Mayor Ramon Dela Cruz and House Speaker Joseph Deleon Guerrero (Ind-Saipan) separately welcomed the

governor's public statement, hoping it will galvanize the CNMI's position on simultaneous military plans on the islands.

"It's going to be a totally different Tinian," Inos said, if artillery ranges are allowed on the island, two-thirds of which is already under lease to the U.S. Department of Defense.

The governor is expected to bring the CNMI's message to Hawaii where he and Guam Gov. Eddie B. Calvo will meet with the U.S. Pacific Command. He said he is set to leave this Sunday.

Inos' statement comes on the heels of his meeting this week with visiting Federal Aviation Administration officials and

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Report: 90 pct. of incoming NMC students at remedial level

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The volume of students taking remedial programs at the Northern Marianas College continues to grow, with about 90 percent of incoming students placing at the remedial level in Math and English courses.

This was according to NMC dean of academic programs services Barbara Merfalen, who disclosed plans

See NMC on Page 4

Fewer food stamp recipients

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The volume of low-income individuals who avail of the government's Nutrition Assistance Program, or food stamp, continues to drop, with nearly 200 fewer recipients in fiscal year 2013.

NAP administrator Walter Macaranas disclosed that a total of 3,470 households were issued food stamp vouchers in fiscal year 2013—much lower than fiscal year 2012's total of 3,662 households.

In fiscal year 2013, the NAP program served 3,207 households on Saipan, 114 on Rota, 146 on Tinian, and three on the Northern Islands, Macaranas said.

The decline in program recipients is primarily attributed to the recent 50-cent hike in the minimum wage of the CNMI, which resulted in some families going above the threshold for food stamp vouchers.

"This is a slight decrease of 192, and this is due to

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Macaranas

Customs seizes smuggled cigarettes



By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Whether through pure luck or a keen sense of smell, the Customs Services Division was able to seize Wednesday 40 cartons of smuggled cigarettes hidden in two boxes mixed with some 400 boxes of various merchandise in a 20-foot container from China. The container and the smuggled cigarettes were consigned to a Lower Base wholesaler, New Plus Enterprise, Customs director Joe Mafnas said.

"[It's] more like finding a needle in a haystack," Mafnas said.

It was supposed to be a random customs inspection of the contents of the 20-foot container. It turned into a 100 percent inspection upon the discovery of two boxes meant to be electric fans but were instead filled

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Customs officer Antonio Arriola shows yesterday afternoon the confiscated 40 cartons of cigarettes from China smuggled into the CNMI. When they were discovered, they were in two electric fan boxes topped with toys, and mixed with some 400 other boxes containing different merchandise in a 20-foot container.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

December visitor arrivals essentially flat. PAGE 3
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Local

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Sobeck to lead NOAA Fisheries

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

U.S. Interior acting assistant secretary for insular areas Eileen Sobeck, who temporarily filled the post previously held by Anthony “Tony” M. Babauta about a year ago, will become the new assistant administrator for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Fisheries beginning Jan. 27.

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) credited Sobeck with providing \$1.2 million in grants to help keep the Commonwealth Health Center open and certified over the last year.

“I am grateful for her work at the Office of Insular Affairs and look forward to continuing to work with Ms. Sobeck in her new position, protecting fisheries and the fishing economy in the Pacific and around our nation,” Sablan said.

It was also under Sobeck’s term as acting assistant secretary for insular areas that the U.S. Labor Ombudsman’s Office closed at the end of fiscal year 2013 after 14 years of aiding thousands of foreign workers in the CNMI who were victims of labor abuses, human trafficking, sex trafficking, and illegal recruitment, among other things.

This, despite requests to keep the ombudsman’s office open, at least until the end of the transitional program for alien workers in the CNMI.

On Jan. 15, acting NOAA administrator Dr. Kathryn Sullivan appointed Sobeck as assistant administrator for NOAA Fisheries. She takes the helm from Samuel Rauch, who has served as acting assistant administrator since 2012.

As assistant administrator, Sobeck will oversee the management and conservation of recreational and commercial fisheries, and the protection of marine mammals, marine protected species, and coastal fisheries habitat within the U.S. exclusive economic zone, NOAA said.



Sobeck

NOAA Fisheries employs 4,800 people in five regional offices, six science centers, and 12 laboratories in 15 states and U.S. territories.

“Since the beginning of her career, Eileen has sought to strike a balance in management of natural resources to ensure sustainable uses while protecting and preserving our marine ecosystems for future generations,” NOAA’s Sullivan said.

She added that Sobeck’s background and expertise will be an asset at NOAA Fisheries as they work to continue turning the corner on overfishing, protect endangered marine species, and promote smart management approaches to build sustainable fisheries and vibrant coastal communities.

Sobeck currently serves as acting assistant secretary of the Interior’s Office of Insular Affairs. She has served as deputy assistant secretary for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife and Parks at the Department of the Interior since 2009.

“I am honored to be returning to NOAA in this very important role,” Sobeck said in a statement. “From managing our nation’s fisheries to protecting endangered marine species and ecosystems to promoting commercial and recreational fishing, the work of NOAA fisheries is critically important to the nation. I look forward to joining the team and working with the talented men and women within the organization to fulfill its mission.”

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Dec. visitor arrivals essentially flat

December 2013 visitor arrivals to the Northern Mariana Islands were essentially flat year-on-year, decreasing just 3 percent compared to December 2012. According to the Marianas Visitors Authority, arrivals to the islands of Saipan, Tinian and Rota registered 38,152 visitors in December 2013 compared to 39,272 in December 2012.

Arrivals from Japan dropped 23 percent in December to 11,241 visitors. Delta Air Lines reduced their night flight DL288 from daily service to five times a week effective Oct. 1 through Dec. 23. The 15-percent decline in air seat supply from Narita impacted the Japanese market heavily. In addition, the depreciation of the Japanese yen continued in December, dropping to the lowest level seen in five years, and making travel by Japanese to the NMI in December effectively 18 percent more expensive than in December 2012.

Arrivals from Korea rose 5 percent in December to 13,566 visitors, generating more visitors than any other source market. With the launch of Dynamic Airways' new direct service from Incheon to Saipan in October as the first low-cost carrier linking the Korea market with the CNMI, and Asiana Airlines' additional charter flights two times a week from Oct. 30 to Mar. 29, the Korea market is seeing the introduction of a wide range of new travel products to the NMI with competitive prices. Dynamic Airways has doubled the number of flights from Seoul to the NMI from two a week to

four a week during the high season from Jan. 5 to Feb. 28, 2014, which will ensure continued strong growth in arrivals out of the Korea market for the period.

Meanwhile, arrivals from China jumped 10 percent in December to 9,579 visitors and third-ranked source country for the NMI. With the forthcoming Chinese New Year holiday from Jan. 30 to Feb. 7, all charter flights from China to the NMI are fully booked from Shanghai, Beijing, and Guangzhou. Saipan, Tinian and Rota are rapidly becoming one of most popular island destinations for Chinese visitors during the peak holiday season. Meanwhile, Dynamic Airways has announced it will launch charter flights from Tianjin, Wuhan, and Hangzhou later this month.

Arrivals from Russia jumped 59 percent to 1,432 visitors in December, making Russia once again the CNMI's fastest-growing source market. Arrivals to the NMI continue to soar as a result of strong airlift from East Russia via AVIACHARTERS and Asiana Airlines.

Economic highlights

For the fourth consecutive month, the Japanese Cabinet's December report assessed "the economy is on the way to recovery at a moderate pace." In December, the yen further declined in value as Japan issued new stimulus and continued to aggressively inject liquidity into the financial system, while the U.S. slowed its easing measures. On Dec. 27, the rate fell to 105.02 yen to the dollar, the

weakest yen in five years and two months. Meanwhile, the Japan Student Travel Association, which keeps track of travel arranged by elementary, middle and high schools, announced the number of trips carried out and participating students in the 2012 school year (ending March 2013); in terms of visits, China dropped out of the top 5, replaced by Micronesia.

The Bank of Korea announced that the gross domestic product (chained volume measure of GDP) in the third quarter of 2013 grew by 1.1 percent compared to the previous quarter, the same figure as given in the advanced estimates. Korea's exports expanded at a faster pace than expected in December, reaffirming the view that Asia's fourth-largest economy remains on track for recovery. The finance ministry revised up its growth forecast for 2013 to 2.8 percent from June projection of 2.7 percent, maintaining the economy will likely continue to pick up after growing 2 percent in 2012. The ministry expects the economy to grow 3.9 percent in 2014.

According to the Korea Tourism Organization, the number of Korean outbound travelers in November was 1,154,064, 3.3 percent higher than the number of outbound travelers in November 2012. The won/dollar exchange rate fell 6.56 over the past month to be closed at 1,051.08 won per dollar. (MVA)

Marpi closed off on Jan. 29

The Department of Public Safety will be blocking off the northern part of Saipan, from Marpi north, on Jan. 29, 2014, from about 12pm to 3pm, to dispose of a significant collection of unexploded ordnance that has been collected by the department's Explosive Response Team.

We are requesting all visitors to

these popular areas of the island to make arrangements to visit either in the morning before the 12pm deadline or after the operation has completed at 3pm.

Anyone with questions can contact the Explosives Response Team Operational Supervisor, Sgt. Anthony I. Macaranas at (670) 483-5818. (DPS)

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Next week is Catholic Schools Week 2014

Next week, Mount Carmel School on Saipan and Eskuelan San Francisco de Borja on Rota will join the rest of the nation in celebrating Catholic Schools Week 2014.

This year's CSW theme speaks to the holistic framework of Catholic education by proclaiming, "Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge, and Service". As the National Catholic Educational Association announced, "The theme encompasses several concepts that are at the heart of a Catholic education. First, schools are communities—small families in their own right, but also members of the larger community of home, church, city and nation. Faith, knowledge and service are three measures by which any Catholic school can and should be judged."

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa prepared for the celebration of CSW 2014 with a proclamation from the Office of the Governor on Tuesday, Jan. 21. The proclamation announced Jan. 26 through Feb. 1, 2014, as Catholic Schools Week, "recognizing

the sacrifices of the parents who chose and continue to choose to send their children to Catholic schools, and acknowledging the outstanding commitment of the teachers, administrators, and other personnel who provide excellent education in the Catholic schools in the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa."

Each school continues its celebration of CSW 2014 throughout the week with various activities.

For its part, Mount Carmel School has prepared a full week of events that are aligned with CSW themes for each day of the week. MCS CSW chair and business manager Keiko Yamagata is inviting the whole community to join the school in the festivities.

"We invite all our families, AlumKnights, board members, and supporters to join us throughout the week in celebrating CSW," Yamagata said. "We've been working together with the entire CSW committee to ensure that this will be another successful celebration and we're excited to join the rest of the nation in celebrating Catholic Schools Week."

On Sunday at 9am, the focus will be on "Catholic Schools in our Parishes" as MCS students converge on Mount Carmel Cathedral to kick off CSW 2014 with a Eucharistic Celebration.

On Monday, the focus shifts to "Catholic Schools in our Community" as MCS junior high and high school students engage in different activities that support community services. Elementary school students will make banners expressing their appreciation for the school's many donors and supporters.

Tuesday will be dedicated to "Catholic Schools in our Faculty and Staff". On that day, MCS will hold an appreciation program for faculty and staff, in which the 2014 MCS Teacher of the Year and Support Staff of the Year will be announced.

On Wednesday, MCS will celebrate "Catholic Schools in our Vocations" with a Eucharistic Celebration, which will be followed by a vocations talk and other activities honoring vocations.

MCS will shift its attention on Thursday to the rest of the country with "Catholic Schools

in our Nation" as students prepare letters, cards, and donated goods for men and women in the armed forces.

Friday morning's emphasis will be on "Catholic Schools in our Students" with MCS students participating in a roadside waving in the morning, followed by field activities and demonstrations.

Friday night will highlight "Catholic Schools in our Families" with the school's signature CSW event, Family Night. Held on the school grounds beginning at 6pm, Family Night will feature dinner, entertainment, and the presentation of a new award, Parents of the Year.

The school's celebration of Catholic Schools Week will conclude with the "Night with the Knights" AlumKnight fundraising banquet on Saturday. The "Night with the Knights" will feature a school uniform fashion show, a music video montage of the school's history, raffle prizes, and entertainment with a live band. The night will also be used to launch a capital campaign to renovate the school's historic stage, which was recently reopened after a

20-year hiatus. The event will also include the announcement of the 2014 AlumKnight of the Year. Formerly known as the Distinguished Graduate Award, nominations for the prestigious award have been expanded to include AlumKnights who spent at least four consecutive years at the school.

The celebration of Catholic Schools Week began as an an-

nual event in 1974. Catholic Schools Week and the National Marketing Campaign are joint projects of the National Catholic Educational Association, the world's largest private professional education association, and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the national public policy organization of U.S. bishops. **(MCS)**

CUSTOMS

From Page 1

with toys on top and smuggled cigarettes underneath. The other 10 to 15 electric fan boxes contained actual electric fans.

Mafnas is thankful for and lauded Customs personnel for successfully intercepting the smuggled cigarettes.

The Customs director said the consignee was fined \$2,000 for the smuggled cigarettes, and was assessed twice

for excise tax.

Mafnas said he gave a stern warning to New Plus Enterprise that the next time it's caught smuggling cigarettes, they will be assessed the maximum fine of \$10,000 plus excise taxes.

He said it was the first time New Plus Enterprises was found smuggling cigarettes so they were assessed only \$2,000 on Wednesday.

The consignee paid the fine. Mafnas said the cigarettes, which he labels "contrabands," are up for destruction.

FEWER

From Page 1

recent increases in the CNMI minimum wage, non-compliance with program requirements, and gainful employment," Macaranas told *Saipan Tribune*.

The first quarter of the current fiscal year shows a similar drop in the number of food stamp recipients. Covering the period from October 2013 to January 2014, the number of households that availed of food stamps totaled 3,257, which is 213 fewer than fiscal 2013's recipients of 3,470 households.

The first quarter report indicates that there are 3,001 clients on Saipan, 110 on Rota, 143 on Tinian, and three on the Northern Islands.

The Nutrition Assistance Program was established on July 2, 1982, through a block grant that

is 100 percent federally funded. NAP is under the auspices of the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs.

For both fiscal years 2013 and 2014, the food stamp program received and will receive \$12.148 million, Macaranas said.

Currently, he said, the program's minimum benefit (household of one) is \$133 while the highest benefit (household of 15) is \$1,460.

For households receiving Supplemental Security Income, the maximum benefit is \$20 per SSI household member, he said.

"The CNMI NAP Income and Benefit threshold has not increased since 1997, therefore NAP is proactively working with its grantor [U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service] to increase the income and benefit threshold to assist CNMI residents who may qualify," said Macaranas.

NMC

From Page 1

to address the problem by first initiating a study that will help identify factors why many students are unprepared for college.

"It has become increasingly clear that there are several factors that affect course and college completion rates at NMC. One factor is placement at the remedial level. Approximately, 90 percent of incoming students place in remedial level in Math and English courses," said Merfalen in her report to the Board of Regents.

Other factors are the lack of regular class attendance, work and personal related absences, and challenging program requirements, among others.

Because of this concern, NMC has partnered with an expert that would aid the college in doing an in-depth research on the subject. *Saipan Tribune* learned that NMC will begin work on two studies in February in partnership with McREL, a research organization best known for analyzing research.

The first study considers how the high school background of incoming NMC students is connected to whether a student is

placed in remedial or non-remedial math and English courses.

The second study will focus on college success for students who are, or are not, placed in remedial English or math classes upon entry to NMC.

The purpose of this partnership is to improve remediation outcomes for students entering NMC.

"At the national level, remedial programs are broken and in dire need of being revamped. For far too many U.S. college students, college begins—and often ends—in remediation. Although NMC does not have comparable data on associate

degree completion for college-ready students requiring remediation, the college will be working with McREL on two studies on college readiness and success in the CNMI beginning this February 2014," stated Merfalen.

According to Merfalen's report, course completion rates are particularly helpful in identifying those courses where students are having the most difficulty.

"It is clear that students are facing challenges in these developmental courses. The ultimate goal is to improve remediation outcomes," states the report.

TINIAN

From Page 1

his administration's meeting with Marianas Forces Pacific officials last week.

The governor said it was never envisioned that Tinian will host artillery, what he described as "big guns." He said live-fire training ranges using "small arms" was initially planned and that's something that's acceptable.

Inos was referring to a 2010 Record of Decision for the Guam and CNMI military buildup's final environmental impact statement, wherein four live-fire training ranges will be built on Tinian: a platoon battle course, an automated combat pistol/military police firearms qualification course, rifle known distance range, and a field firing range.

"Tinian is currently under discussion and it's really the intensity, how large the artillery or ammos that will be involved in there. It was never envisioned to have anything bigger than

50-mm or whatever that is. But since the shift in the Guam firing range up to Tinian, there's been talk about moving the scale up on Tinian. That's going to be a major concern because it's not going to be the same Tinian once you start bringing in those big guns," the governor said.

He emphasized that having military training on Tinian "300 days a year, 24/7" will have its negative impacts.

"It's going to be a totally different Tinian," Inos said in an interview at the signing of three local laws and one public law yesterday afternoon on Capital Hill.

'On same page'

The Tinian mayor, in a phone interview last night, said the governor's statement is "welcome news" that he said will strengthen the resolve to oppose artillery ranges on both Tinian and Pagan.

"I'm very glad we're all now on the same page. I appreciate very much the governor's stand," Dela Cruz said.

While the Tinian mayor ini-

tially supported more military activities on Tinian, he had a dramatic change of heart when he visited artillery ranges in Hawaii that were the similar to the ones being proposed for Tinian.

"Like I said before, there is no way the people of Tinian will accept an artillery range or mortar range on the island. That is just too much. And like I said I can't speak for the people of Pagan but I'm sure they won't want the same thing on their island," Dela Cruz said.

The House speaker, who has been drafting a resolution requesting the governor to take a strong stand against the militarization of Pagan, among other things, also welcomed Inos' statement yesterday.

'No way'

During a public scoping last year, MARFOPAC said the largest artillery that could be used on Tinian is 155 millimeters, and several kinds of mortars.

"Of course, I'm not going to support any kind of activity like that," Inos said. "Some

live-fire training and so forth, maybe, that's part of what was envisioned initially and so that's something that we would support. But to have something bigger, we need to do more study to ensure there is no disruption in civil aeronautics, and so forth. What about the private, commercial aircraft and so forth? Those are the things that we need to look into on Tinian."

Pagan, he said, is an "uphill battle" at this point.

"It's a very contentious issue," Inos added.

The governor said because the military "couldn't do certain things in Guam" such as the need to use "bigger guns," they are going to Tinian.

"And then for the things they can't do on Tinian, they are going to have to do it on Pagan. We're saying 'no.' You do on Tinian what was originally agreed and envisioned and that is some live-fire training exercises," he said.

The governor added that what is being envisioned for Pagan is "more intense" than the bomb-

ings on Farallon de Mendinilla.

"What I understand is that if something were to happen in Pagan, it's big deal," he added.

The U.S. military plans to develop live-fire ranges and training areas on Tinian and Pagan, as the U.S. looks to rebalance forces in the Pacific. Military studies have identified a large number of joint training deficiencies in the Western Pacific and these two islands are eyed to address these deficiencies.

The proposal includes three unit-level training alternatives for Tinian and two combined-level training alternatives for Pagan.

Changes, updates

Meanwhile, Inos and Calvo's Hawaii trip comes days after a team from the Marine Forces Pacific led by executive director Craig Whelden out of Honolulu briefed the Inos administration and the Legislature about the changes that the U.S. military has made to the proposed alternatives related to the use of Tinian and Pagan for live-fire training.

Lt. Gov. Jude U. Hofschneider

der said the Inos administration welcomes MARFOPAC's decision to provide the CNMI with a quarterly update related to the development of an environmental impact statement for the Tinian and Pagan proposals.

MARFOPAC deputy director William S. Febuary and operations officer Tim Roberts, among others, briefed administration and lawmakers last week about the changes made to the proposed alternatives, taking into consideration comments and suggestions from CNMI officials and from scoping meetings as well as further technical work.

Hofschneider added that taking into consideration the CNMI's concerns is welcome news, referring to issues such as access to different areas on Tinian and Pagan, landfill and economic activities.

In response to lawmakers' questions last week, Roberts said the goal is to allow civil or commercial aviation in and out of Tinian at the same time the military is conducting live-fire training, among other things.

Bronster: Why is Jorgensen scared to come to Saipan?

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Margery Bronster, a former attorney general of the State of Hawaii and one of the counsels for Betty Johnson, wonders why her co-counsel, Bruce Jorgensen, is scared to come to Saipan.

In her declaration filed in federal court on Wednesday, Bronster said that Jorgensen, who originated Johnson's class action, never appeared in person at the hearings and settlement negotiations of the case in the U.S. District Court for the NMI.

As this developed, Jorgensen filed yesterday a "unified statement" in support of his fee petition, saying he has conveyed to his co-counsel, Timothy Lord, that he is amenable to a 7-percent cut in hours and fees, which would set his total billable hours at 3,678.7 hours and fees at \$1,195,580.10. Jorgensen's initial request was for at least \$18.6 million.

Bronster, however, questioned Jorgensen's invoices for 63.9 hours or for \$20,767.50 that was apparently incurred during the settlement negotiations in June, when Jorgensen did not participate in those proceedings and his only role was to be occasionally informed of the status of the mediation.

"Jorgensen had repeatedly told me that he feared being in Saipan so he would not travel there, but he never explained why," said Bronster.

Bronster and her colleague at Bronster Hoshibata law firm, attorney Robert Hatch, traveled from Hawaii to Saipan for all of the substantive hearings.

Bronster disclosed that Jorgensen suddenly appeared one day in June on Saipan but immediately left, apparently because he had been "spotted."

She recalled that she and Hatch traveled to Saipan to attend a three-day intensive mediation with Hawaii Chief Bankruptcy Judge Robert Faris at the federal court on June 25-27, 2013.

"Before we left, Jorgensen made clear that he could not join us," the lawyer said.

As expected, Bronster said, Jorgensen did not show up for the first day of mediation.

Upon their return to their hotel that evening, they were shocked to find Jorgensen waiting for them in the lobby.

"He did not explain his surprise visit or why he came all the way to Saipan only to stay away from the mediation. Instead, he said that he was traveling incognito," she said.

Bronster said that after their meeting that lasted about 45 minutes, Jorgensen left and did

not join them in the final two days of negotiations.

Bronster said Jorgensen apparently left Saipan that evening or the next morning, explaining that he had been "spotted" and could not stay in the CNMI.

The lawyer said Jorgensen's "role" in the mediation sessions and subsequent settlement was to be occasionally informed of its status.

Bronster disclosed that Jorgensen is billing 63.9 hours or \$20,767.50 from June 21 to 27, 2013, when his role during this entire period was to be occa-

sionally informed of the status of the negotiations.

Bronster pointed out that while Jorgensen's other entries are too vague to be meaning-

fully analyzed, his entries for June 21 to June 27 are clearly misleading because they purport to claim he was working on the case for 63.9 hours

when at most he could have properly billed only an hour or two for being occasionally informed of the progress of the negotiations.

"It is telling that in this one example, where Jorgensen has

provided sufficient factual detail to compare the entries to what actually transpired, they have proven false," she said.

Bronster added that the misleading character of Jorgensen's invoices for June 21 to 27, 2013, casts serious doubt on the veracity of all of his entries.

Bronster has informed the court that Johnson's counsels failed to agree on a unified petition for attorneys' fees and costs by the Wednesday deadline.

Bronster recommended that the only way to measure Jorgensen's contribution in the case is by granting him 10 percent of the total attorney's fees the court determines are reasonable.

She also recommended awarding Johnson's local

counsel, Stephen C. Woodruff, \$400,000 for his work on this case.

With respect to Johnson's other counsel, Timothy Lord, Bronster said their law firm could not come to an agreement with Lord because by the time they entered this case, Lord had ceased participating in the case.

Bronster Hoshibata is seeking \$17.5 million; Lord is asking for either \$3.6 million or \$5.9 million; and Woodruff is requesting for \$2.9 million.

Under the settlement agreement, the CNMI government will shoulder the attorneys' fees and costs of Johnson's counsels upon the court's approval.

» **Johnson's counsel says lawyer did not join negotiations but bills \$20,767 for 63 hours**

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Kilili prompts Jewell on conveyance of mineral rights to NMI

Now that the transfer of submerged lands in the Northern Mariana Islands from the federal government to the Commonwealth has begun, Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) has asked Interior Secretary Sally Jewell to take action on the transfer of oil, gas, and other mineral rights to the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Territorial Submerged Lands Act, which Sablan had amended to include the Northern Mariana Islands, requires the Secretary to convey to the Commonwealth "all right, title, and interest of the United States in deposits of oil, gas, and other minerals in the submerged lands." Sablan made a formal request for the transfer by letter to the Secretary last week.

"The original Territorial Submerged Lands Act of 1974 kept the right to oil, gas, and mineral deposits in federal hands," Sablan explained. "But Congressmen Philip Burton, along with George Miller, Nick Rahall, and others had the law amended in 1980, requiring that Interior turn over those rights to the territories."

"Now that ownership of submerged lands is transferred to the Northern Marianas, the Secretary is, likewise, required to make a formal conveyance of those mineral rights to the Commonwealth government."

"I just want to make sure that happens."

Sablan was successful at establishing Commonwealth ownership of submerged

lands in the Northern Mariana Islands with enactment of U.S. Public Law 113-34 in September 2013. President Obama decided last week to use his authority under the Territorial Submerged Lands Act to hold on to lands in the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument and around military leases on Tinian and Farallon de Medinilla temporarily. Obama's proclamation conditions transfer of those areas to agreements with the

Commonwealth government on protection of natural resources in the Monument and of military training offshore the military leases.

In addition to reminding Jewell of the responsibility to transfer oil, gas, and mineral rights, Sablan also asked for an accounting of any existing leases or permits that the federal government may have issued in areas now owned by the Commonwealth.

"I am not aware of any

such leases or grants," Sablan wrote. But, if there are any leases, he asked for Jewell's "confirmation that the proceeds, as they accrue, will now be conveyed to the Commonwealth."

Making sure that payments from any existing leases of oil, gas, or minerals in a territory's submerged lands would go to the people of the territory was also part of the amendment that Burton and Miller enacted in 1980. *(Office of the Delegate)*

Close to 1.2K apply for NMI scholarship programs

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI continues to see a growing number of students wanting to obtain college degrees here and abroad, as shown by the over a thousand applications received by the CNMI Scholarship Office for the spring 2014 semester.

Scholarship administrator Rose Pangelinan disclosed to *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that a total of 1,182 applications for spring semester grants have been filed with her office. Of this amount, the bulk is from ongoing scholars, totaling 927 applications.

About 64 returning applicants applied for the new semester while 191 applicants are classified as new students.

Pangelinan disclosed that,

as of Jan. 17, only 70 of these applications are complete and under review by the office. Supporting documents for all applications are due on Feb. 28. The final number of approved and denied applications will be determined after that date.

The Scholarship Office has two program offerings: the Educational Assistance Program and Honors Scholarship Program. However, the Honors scholarship program has stopped receiving new applicants since fall 2013 semester as a result of the expiration of the sunset provision that created it. The Scholarship Office now just provides funds to those under this program so that they can complete the remaining years of their studies.

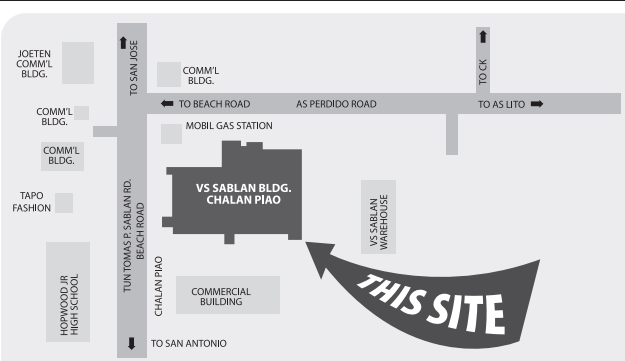
It will be recalled that finan-

cial awards to EAP scholars were also cut starting in the fall 2013 semester due to budget constraints. These reduced awards will continue for this spring 2014 term.

Pangelinan earlier disclosed that EAP awards are \$850 for per semester scholar, while \$550 for quarter-term scholars. This reflects a 19-percent cut for per semester recipients and a 21-percent cut for quarter-term scholars compared to what they previously received.

The reduction in awards, *Saipan Tribune* learned, was based on the budget approved for the program in fiscal year 2014, which is \$1.2 million. To avail of the EAP award, it requires meeting a 2.25 cumulative GPA and the scholar must be enrolled in 12 units or more for the semester.

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Saipan Tribune, Inc. is an equal opportunity employer. Qualified women, minorities, and disabled persons are encouraged to apply.

‘Beautify my Marianas’ now open to all groups

The Marianas Visitors Authority and the Saipan Chamber of Commerce announced yesterday that all groups are now welcome to apply for “Beautify My Marianas,” an island beautification project providing cash for cleanup projects.

“Beautify My Marianas”

aims to keep the Northern Marianas clean and pristine and is patterned after the Chamber’s longstanding cash for trash program. The program offers a minimum of \$100 to groups to pick up trash in designated areas on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

“We’re excited to now expand eligibility for the program beyond schools and non-profits to any group interested in helping to keep our islands beautiful,” said MVA Community Projects manager Martin Duenas. “We know there are many people out there ‘mak-

ing tourism their business’ by picking up trash, and now they can help cover any costs they may have in volunteering their time and own resources.”

Depending on the level of difficulty and the type of project (e.g., trash cleaning with some tree trimming or

brush cutting), the \$100 fee may be increased. Applying groups must meet all eligibility guidelines.

Interested groups may apply to the Saipan Chamber of Commerce or the MVA, and upon approval of their application, they will be assigned an area that requires immediate trash clean up. It will be up to the group submitting

their application to decide how many people will clean the area and when the cleanup will be accomplished. Applications are available at www.mymarianas.com and www.saipanchamber.com.

Approved groups must provide before, during and after photos of the site, as evidence of the cleanup prior to disbursement of funds. (MVA)

BOE creates procurement appeal process

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Board of Education has strengthened its autonomy by creating an appeals process committee that would take charge of procurement disputes.

Under the current procurement rules of the Public Schools System system, project contractors and bidders who are dissatisfied with the education commissioner’s decision can appeal their cases

directly to the Office of the Public Auditor.

With the creation of the “PSS Procurement Appeals Process,” such cases will now go up to the Board of Education for review and decision.

BOE chair Herman T. Guerrero said that creating this new panel will strengthen the board’s autonomy in making sound decisions for public school operations.

The new panel will composed of three members of the board appointed by the BOE

chairman. A chairperson to lead the panel will be selected among these three.

“Our current regulation states that after the COE decision, any appeal goes to OPA. Since we are an autonomous agency, it should go up to the board and from the board to the court if that’s required as part of the process,” explained Guerrero.

The appeal process committee may “affirm, reverse or modify the decision or remand it for further consideration.”

Based on the new policy, when a protest against the making of an award is received, the award shall be withheld pending disposition of the protest. The bidders whose bids might become eligible for award shall be informed of the protests.

When a written protest is received, award shall not be made until the matter is resolved, unless it is determined that the materials and services to be contracted for are urgently required; delivery or performance will be unduly delayed by failure to make award promptly; or a prompt award will be advantageous to the PSS.

But if this happens, the education commissioner must ex-

plain the need for an immediate award.

“A written appeal to the appeals committee from a decision by the COE may be taken provided that the party taking the appeal has first submitted a written protest to the COE and otherwise fully complied and the COE has denied the protest or has failed to act on the protest within the time provided,” states the new policy.

JKPL to start ukulele classes Feb. 4

The Joeten-Kiyu Public Library will be bringing back its ukulele classes starting Feb. 4 at the library’s Children of our Homeland Library.

Beginner classes will be held every Tuesday from 3:30pm to 4:30 pm, while intermediate and advanced classes will be every Thursday from 4:45pm to 5:45pm. Larry Lee will be handling the classes.

The beginner class is open to anyone who is interested on learning how to play the ukulele. Students planning on enrolling in the advanced ukulele class must first pass the intermediate class.

The ukulele classes at JKPL are open to children 8 years or older and adults and costs \$50 for the lessons’ eight-hour entirety.

Deadline to register is Feb. 1 and a minimum of 15 students and a maximum of 40 students are needed for the classes to start. Registration is on first-come, first-paid basis.

Students must also provide their own ukuleles and a folder to hold music sheets. JKPL recommends plastic sheet protectors and a three-ring binder for this purpose.

Parents or guardians must also sign a liability waiver form on behalf of their participating children and must adhere to public library policies and procedures.

For more information, visit the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library or call 235-7316 or 235-7322-23, fax 235-7550. (Mark Rabago)

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**Saturday, January 25, 2014
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**PROCUREMENT, INSTALLATION & COMMISSIONING
OF PTZ CAMERAS AND SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM
PROJECT NO. CPA-RFP-006-14**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is soliciting sealed proposals for the procurement, installation & commissioning of PTZ cameras and security and surveillance systems at the Port of Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Proposal Package and other considerations will be available for pick up beginning January 10, 2014 at the Office of the Executive Director, 2nd Floor of the Arrival Building, Saipan International Airport.

All proposals shall be sealed and marked on the cover package outside as follows: “Proposal for Procurement, Installation & Commissioning of PTZ cameras and Surveillance System, Project No. CPA-RFP-006-14”. One original and four copies of the proposal must be submitted no later than 4:00 p.m. LOCAL TIME, February 7, 2014, to the Office of the Executive Director at the Saipan International Airport. All Proposals shall become the property of the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

A pre-proposal conference will be held at 10:00 a.m., January 23, 2014 at the Port of Saipan Conference Room. Attendance at this pre-proposal conference is mandatory and only those vendors present at the pre-proposal conference will be allowed to submit proposals. A site visit may be conducted immediately after the conference or may be requested by making appointments with the CPA Seaport Manager to ensure that proposers submitting a proposal are aware of the general area where the cameras are to be installed.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted for: (a) any of the reasons set forth in this Request for Proposals; or (b) any of the reasons set forth in the CPA Procurement Rules and Regulations regarding bid rejections or cancellations; or (c) sufficient justification exists that awarding the project contract would not be in the best interest of CPA.

CPA further reserves the right to waive any defects in said proposals if in its sole opinion to do so would be in CPA’s best interest.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

/s/ CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Acting Executive Director

Crew of sinking 500-foot ship rescued in Pacific



U.S. COAST GUARD/COAST GUARD CUTTER ASSATEAGUE

The Coast Guard cutter *Assateague* approaches the disabled 500-foot container ship *Rich Forest*, Jan. 22, 2014. Twenty-four crewmembers on board the *Rich Forest* abandoned ship, Jan. 20, 2014, after the cargo vessel engine room flooded.

APRA HARBOR, Guam—Crewmembers at Coast Guard Sector Guam are assisting 24 crewmembers who abandoned the 500-foot cargo ship *Rich Forest* after the engine room flooded Monday.

The AMVER vessel *C.S. Sunshine* rescued all survivors from life rafts and safely brought them aboard without incident.

The 24 survivors were safely transferred from the *C.S. Sunshine* to the Coast Guard cutter *Sequoia* on Wednesday.

C.S. Sunshine has been released from the case and will continue its voyage to Japan.

The *Sequoia* and the Coast Guard cutter *Assateague* conducted a final visual assessment of the *Rich Forest*, before departing for the islands of Saipan and Guam.

The *Sequoia* is expected to arrive on Saipan Friday where the survivors will be met by Department of Homeland Security Investigations for processing and the *Assateague* will make its way back to its homeport of Guam.

The *Rich Forest* is reported to be riding low at the stern, but still afloat and the owner has continued to pursue options for salvaging the vessel.

At 8am Sunday, watchstanders at the Sector Guam Command Center received report of flooding from the *Rich Forest*.

The ship, carrying logs en route to China, experienced flooding in the engine room and subsequent loss of propulsion.

The Chinese crew reported the vessel was taking on 160 tons of water per hour and generators had failed.

Coast Guard watchstanders in Guam identified four merchant vessels to provide assistance under the Automated Mutual Assistance Vessel Rescue System.

The Coast Guard cutters *Assateague* and *Sequoia* were deployed from Guam but were 18 hours away.

At 1:21pm, the *Rich Forest's* crew entered life rafts and abandoned ship.

AMVER, sponsored by the U.S. Coast Guard, is a unique, computer-based, and voluntary global ship reporting system used worldwide by search and rescue authorities to arrange for assistance to persons in distress at sea. With AMVER, rescue coordinators can identify participating ships in the area of distress and divert the best-suited ship or ships to respond. Prior to sailing, participating ships send a sail plan to the AMVER computer center. Vessels then report every 48 hours until arriving at their port of call. This data is able to project the position of each ship at any point during its voyage. In an emergency, any rescue coordination center can request this data to determine the relative position of AMVER ships near the distress location. On any given day there are over 3,700 ships available to carry out search and rescue services. (USCG)

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

January 24, 2006

PSS teachers get their money back

More than 600 Public School System employees heaved a sigh of relief yesterday when they got their refund of the amount that was inadvertently deducted from their paychecks last week due to a computer glitch. PSS director of finance Richard Waldo confirmed with the Saipan Tribune yesterday afternoon that 99 percent of more than 600 employees of the CNMI education office have already received their reimbursements yesterday. Waldo had said last week that the reimbursement would take some time and that his office would still have to request acting Finance Secretary Eloy Inos for the refund.

MPLA board meeting alarms employees

Despite an imminent move by Gov. Benigno R. Fitial to suspend the Marianas Public Lands Authority's board, it's business as usual for the board, which has set a meeting on Tinian and Rota later this week. Some of the issues on the agenda reportedly involve matters that would benefit some of its officials. The scheduling of the board meeting at the Tinian Dynasty Conference Room on Thursday and at the MPLA conference room on Friday alarmed some of the agency's employees, who urged the governor to immediately exercise his powers to prevent the board meeting from happening, which, according to them, may further jeopardize MPLA funds and resources. The board's agenda include the agricultural homestead waiver application of board member Nicolas Nekai, as well as the proposal to amend the annual leave entitlement of the commissioner and chief financial officer, Edward DeLeon Guerrero and David Demapan, respectively.

January 24, 2007

Anti-monorail drive gets over 1K signatures

A signature campaign to block the approval of the impending monorail project at one of the tourist spots in the CNMI has already garnered over 1,000 signatories. Environmental advocate Angelo Villagomez provided *Saipan Tribune* yesterday a copy of the names of the 1,000-plus individuals—tourists, business leaders, professionals, and Commonwealth residents—who have signed up to express their opposition to the proposed monorail project at the Grotto in Marpi, considered one of the best diving spots in the world.

'46 govt execs have over-the-cap salaries'

The CNMI government could save as much as \$400,000 a year if the salaries of administration officials are kept within applicable caps, according to two lawmakers. Reps. Stanley T. Torres and Ramon Tebuteb claimed that at least 46 appointed officials are receiving salaries in excess of the ceilings set by law for their positions. These officials include Cabinet members, deputy secretaries, resident department heads, division directors, special assistants and legal counsels to the governor and Lt. governor. The two members of the House minority bloc reached their conclusion after comparing the officials' current salaries with the salary caps set by Public Law 4-32, as amended by P.L. 6-23, P.L. 7-31, and P.L. 9-25.

January 24, 2008

'So far, so good'

Fueled by strong market demand as well as the renminbi's robust exchange rate against the U.S. dollar, the resumed Shanghai-Saipan flights of China Eastern Airlines is enjoying great success so far. The high load factors of the twice-a-week charter flights were disclosed by Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino manager Tom Liu and Century Tours operations manager Nomi in separate interviews with the Saipan Tribune. Tinian Dynasty's Tinian Dynasty International Travel and Century Tours, an affiliate of this newspaper, jointly charter the Shanghai-Saipan flights and share 130 seats in each flight.

Stores stop selling cough, cold medicines for infants

Many major stores in the CNMI have already taken children's cold medicines off their shelves after the Food & Drug Administration issued a public health advisory about them on Jan. 18, 2008. PHI pharmacist Dr. Theodore "Ted" R. Parker said that, to his understanding, parents were not following the directions properly and were accidentally overdosing their children. "It was not based on the actual problems with the medicine itself; it was the fact that parents were not reading the directions on the back," said Parker.

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SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: FEBRUARY 11, 2014
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/s/ FRANK M. RABULIMAN
DIRECTOR OF DEQ

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

**NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING
CORPORATION**

INVITATION FOR BID
(This ad is paid for by NMHC with HUD funds.)

BID SUBMISSION DATE: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2014 • TIME: 10:00 AM

NMHC IFB 2014-001
"The Expansion of the Division of Youth Services Shelter"

Proposal packets will be available on Wednesday, January 22, 2014, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays. A non-refundable payment of One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) is required for each set. Payment shall be by cash, credit card, money order or cashier's check (payable to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation).

A mandatory pre-bid conference will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, January 30, 2014, at the NMHC Conference Room, Saipan.

This project is funded by a grant from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), under its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).

/s/ Marcie M. Tomokane
Board Chairwoman & Contracting Officer

/s/ Herman S. Sablan, Director
Division of Procurement & Supply

**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**

ADDENDUM NO. 1

RFP-GOV14-037 – Video Lottery Gaming Site and Associated Services

RFP-GOV14-038 – Supply of Video Lottery Central Control System and Associated Services

RFP-GOV14-030 – Supply of Video Lottery Terminals and Associated Services

The previously advertised notice, Request For Proposals ("RFP") for the "Video Lottery Gaming Site", "Supply of Video Lottery Central Control System", & "Supply of Video Lottery Terminals" has been amended. The specific amendment is to extend proposal submission from January 31, 2014, 4:30 p.m., to April 01, 2014 4:30 p.m. (ChST) or Sixty (60) Calendar days.

All other elements of the RFP remain as originally provided. For further information on this project, please contact the Capital Improvement Office, during working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. – Monday through Friday, except holidays) or by contacting Mr. James R. Stump, Contracting Officer at (670)664-2375 or by fax at (670)664-2408.

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

**INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB 14-CHCC-047**

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: FEBRUARY 07, 2014
TIME: 10:00 A.M.

**"VIP HOUSING UNITS FOR THE COMMONWEALTH
HEALTHCARE CORPORATION"**

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS; IN WHOLE OR IN PART, AND TO WAVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

/s/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CEO - COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORP.

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

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JAN. 24 - FEB. 09, 2014

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Diamond G Rice \$9⁹⁹ 15lbs \$25⁹⁹ 50lbs		Chicken Leg Quarter \$18⁹⁹ 22lbs \$25⁹⁹ 33lbs		Whole Chicken \$41⁹⁹ 30lbs	
Pork Spareribs \$20⁴⁹ 20lbs		Babyribs \$21⁴⁹ 10lbs		Ichiban \$10⁹⁹ CASE	
Max Butane Gas \$21⁹⁹ CASE					

| GROCERIES | GROCERIES | GROCERIES | GROCERIES | GROCERIES | GROCERIES | GROCERIES | GROCERIES | GROCERIES | GROCERIES | GROCERIES |

Country Lime Lemonade, Tang Orange, Kool-Aid \$7⁹⁹	Coffee Mate \$7⁹⁹ 50 OZ.	Folgers Coffee \$11⁹⁹ 33.3 OZ.	Del Monte Whole Kernel Corn 99¢ 15 OZ.	Del Monte Whole Kernel Corn \$5⁷⁹ 106 OZ.	Spam All Kinds \$2³⁵ EA. LIMIT 6	Black Label Luncheon Sausage \$1⁷⁹ EA.. LIMIT 6	Libbys Vienna Sausage 59¢ 50Z.	Ox & Palm Luncheon Loaf \$1⁵⁹ 12 OZ.
Chorizos \$16⁴⁹ 3 lbs.	Campbells Chicken Noodle 89¢ 10 OZ.	King Chef Vegetable Oil 5gal \$31⁹⁹	Del Monte Ketchup \$4⁶⁹ 64 OZ.	White Sugar \$2⁷⁹ 2 KG.	Fresco Vegetable Oil \$9⁹⁹ 1 GAL.	Dragon Vegetable Oil \$9⁴⁹ 1GAL.	Kikkoman Soy Sauce \$4⁵⁹ 1.6 L.	Rota Water \$5⁹⁹ 350ML.

| FROZEN | FROZEN | FROZEN | FROZEN | FROZEN | FROZEN | FROZEN | FROZEN | FROZEN | FROZEN | FROZEN | FROZEN | FROZEN | FROZEN |

Tilapia \$1⁰⁹ /LB.	Milk Fish \$1⁶⁹ /LB.	Bar S Jumbo Franks \$1²⁹	Bar S Ham \$18⁹⁹ 10LBS.	Ground Beef \$12⁹⁹ 5LBS.	Chamorro Sausage \$4⁴⁹
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| PRODUCE | PRODUCE | PRODUCE | PRODUCE | PRODUCE | PRODUCE | PRODUCE | PRODUCE |

Onion 79¢ LB.	Potato 99¢ LB.	Garlic \$1²⁵ 5 PCS.	U.S. X-Large Eggs \$2⁹⁹ LB.
Celo Apple \$3⁹⁹ /BAG	Orange \$1²⁹ LB.	Honeydew/ Cantaloupe \$1²⁹ LB.	Korean Pear \$2⁹⁹ LB.

| FAMILY BAG | FAMILY BAG | FAMILY BAG |

Stew Chicken	\$6.99	Pork Chop	\$11.99
Chicken Leg Qtr	\$4.99	Pork Spareribs	\$6.99
Chicken Nuggets	\$12.99	Pork Butt Steak	\$9.99
Chicken Wings	\$12.99	Beef Ribeye	\$15.99
Turkey Tail	\$6.99	Beef Stew	\$12.99
Mackerel Fish	\$5.99	Beef Shank	\$12.99
Mackerel Pike	\$6.49	Beef Feet	\$4.99
Pork Hock	\$7.99	Beef Shortribs	\$19.99
Pork Adobo	\$9.99	Ox Tail	\$15.99
Pork Bellies	\$11.99	Smoked Ham Steak	\$12.99

| NON-FOOD | NON-FOOD | NON-FOOD | NON-FOOD | NON-FOOD | NON-FOOD | NON-FOOD | NON-FOOD | NON-FOOD | NON-FOOD | NON-FOOD |

Dawn Dishwashing Soap \$8⁹⁹ 90 oz.	Joy Ultra \$1⁴⁹ 12.5 OZ. \$6⁹⁹ 90 OZ.	Purex \$4⁴⁹ 50 OZ.	Gain Liquid \$5⁹⁹ 50 OZ. \$9⁹⁹ 100 OZ.	Gain Powder \$15⁹⁹ 102 Loads \$18⁹⁹ 120 Loads	Head & Shoulders All Kinds \$5⁴⁹ 23OZ. \$7⁹⁹ Shampoo	Bounty Paper Towel \$20⁹⁹ 15 Rolls	Charmin Basic Toilet Paper \$7⁹⁹ 12 ROLLS \$14⁹⁹ 24 ROLLS	Foam Plates \$3²⁹ 50 CT \$7⁹⁹ 125 CT	Charmin Tissue (Regular) \$7⁹⁹ 24 Rolls
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ONE STOP SHOP WITH THE LOWEST PRICES ON ISLAND!

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
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Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Net neutrality must remain a core Internet principle

The success of the Internet is largely due to the fact that, since its inception, users have been able to pick and choose from all the material on it, regardless of the carrier used to access it.

This model has led to one of the greatest technological revolutions of all time. It is now in jeopardy because of a U.S. appeals court ruling last week that threw out the Federal Communications Commission's 2010 rules requiring broadband providers to treat all Internet traffic equally—the concept known as net neutrality.

The ruling is reasonable under current law, but the FCC has the power to change its regulations and make net neutrality rules legal. It needs to act—and users need to rise up in large numbers to keep Congress on their side.

The problem is that current rules don't classify these providers as common carriers, the way telephone service providers are viewed. The Supreme Court has signaled that the FCC could reclassify broadband providers to apply common carrier regulations on them, including net neutrality. That is what needs to happen.

Congress could step in, but that is a less unappealing alternative. The money and political power of broadband operators could well trump the public interest in keeping creativity, innovation and an open marketplace the working principles of the Internet.

Internet service providers such as AT&T and Verizon want the right to profit from the use of their services by individual websites, much like the current pay TV system operates.

They would like sites to pay a premium for high-speed streaming while others have access only to slower service. This would limit the accessibility of small businesses and start-ups, which consequently limit consumers' choices.

An open Internet is a platform for innovation that is one of our most valuable technological resources. Consumers, not broadband providers acting as gatekeepers, should be able to decide which entrepreneurs succeed.

European nations and almost every other developed country in the world already regulate broadband providers as common carriers required to serve all customers equally. It seems so obviously right, but Congress, susceptible to lobbyists, may need persuading, if the FCC doesn't act. That's where Internet users come in.

They have raised their voices before. Two years ago SOPA, the Stop Online Piracy Act, sparked the largest online protest in history because the bill backed by the entertainment industry essentially would have instituted censorship. The protest forced Congress to reject it.

Silicon Valley also has a role to play. Internet giants such as Google and Yahoo succeeded largely because of an open Internet.

Everyone, from users to small businesses to valley behemoths, benefits from equal, open access to online material.

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Huang He and Xin Yi

Author's Note: The names are fictitious; the people are not. The telling is very personal but it may resonate among those in May-December affairs.

In 2001, I traveled from China's capital city while a group of 10 late teenagers from an eastern city transited through Japan. On the flight to Saipan, I sat with two and learned of their travel plans. One of them was eager to practice her English.

I sensed something remiss when I was told the group headed for the CNMI on a one-year student visa. The Commonwealth did not yet issue such visas. They came to finesse their English skills and take the NCLEX a year later. I was inclined not to refute unverified information, so I gave one of the students my name and phone number in case they needed assistance later.

My intuition was on target. The phone call came two months after. The students discovered that reality did not match expectations. They were at the mercy of a sponsor willing to assist their English but on terms that was more servitude than scholarly pursuit. Unhappy with the arrangement, they sought assistance to get the balance of their money back and enroll at NMC's nursing program.

Huang He was one of those girls. The only child of an urban Chinese family, she was determined to fulfill filial gratitude. Her *gaokao* examination (the standard test that determines academic future beyond high school in China) was just "so-so," so she was shunted to vocational training, in this case nursing. At the time, nursing was viewed only as slightly higher than being a maid in a 4-star hotel.

A warmhearted pastor recruited her group of China-trained nurses to Saipan, and though the sponsoring institution meant well, they promoted what they intended to do more than what they currently offered. I transferred three of them to NMC and temporarily housed two at a Methodist Resource Center.

All three finished the RN program, doing well in the NCLEX. Distraught when she was told to stop after the 75th of the 150-question computer test, Huang He found out later that she already excelled in the first half and did not need to proceed further! She passed with flying colors! We married in 2003; divorced four years later.

Here in northeast China where I recently concluded teaching Oral English, one of my recent students was Xin Yi. She hails from Beijing, older than her classmates in a third-tier college where people who only did "so-so" in *gaokao* are enrolled. China in the last 10 years recorded an increase from 25 percent to 62 percent of HS grads attending college; academic learning was extended to students like Xin Yi and new institutions built to accommodate them.

Behaving more adult than classmates who came straight to college from high school while she detoured through the job market,

By JAIME VERGARA

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime Vergara is a resident of Saipan teaching at the Shenyang Aerospace University in China. His email is pinoypanda2031@aol.com.



Xin Yi showed maturity beyond her age. Her family took a trip to the U.S. while the semester was in session and she asked permission to be absent. I asked her to give a 5-minute report upon her return.

Her report was notable on two counts: a) she found herself and her mother as the only people using a parasol on Waikiki Beach, radically exposing her culture's usage of widely marketed skin whitening cosmetics, and b) she saw many Hawaiians of Japanese descent who did not elicit the feelings of disdain she experienced when thinking of Japan in Manchuria (universally regarded as deserving the labial spit *peeyou*). The ones she met were pleasant. The lessons she learned on the commercial virtue of white skin and her bias against the Japanese were heard loudly, delivering pedagogy more effective than what I could have offered.

Huang He and I on Saipan allowed mutual concupiscence to use the language of love with estrogen and testosterone intensity waning after four years of marriage. The cultural divide between an American of Philippine descent and a *Zhongguoren* conditioned to seek financial success for the parents, in a wide generational gap of 37 years, was too much to overcome. Friends later accused me of seducing the tender blossom. Though I exhibited *sa-sa-ib-bek ti puso*, (Iloko for "heartthrob pain", expressed subtly and intensely) at the end, the parting concluded amicably, and the concupiscence was with genuine care and affection.

It is the memory of the time Huang He and I shared in As Lito, triggered by a budding relationship between Xin Yi and I that occasioned this reflection. Of late, Xin Yi and I shared one too many coffee breaks, sat through too long in the dark at the movies with no shortage of kinesthesia, but my double jowl is unmistakably *lao ye* rendering any lust remaining in my bones for someone her age as best left behind on Saipan's shores. Besides, I am probably incapable of alluring her anyway, even if I tried. I took the imaginative play in the dark for what it was.

I brought Xin Yi to the train station on her trip home to Beijing at the end of the school term. When we said "goodbye," we knew it was best not to see each other again. Just as well! My *sa-sa-ib-bek ti puso* will probably be more intense this time were I to mistake concupiscence for love again.

The man who showed the heavens

John Dobson, a man who opened up the heavens for many people, passed away on Jan. 15 in Burbank, Calif. He was 98. Dobson was the inventor of the “Dobsonian” telescope design, which helped make amateur telescopes an affordable and practical proposition. His name has rock star status in amateur astronomy circles. If you ever decide to buy a telescope, be it on Saipan or anywhere else, a Dobsonian design might be in your future.

Dobson, who was born in China, earned a master’s degree in chemistry from UC Berkeley, and after a brief foray in corporate life he became a monk. While in the monastery he kept working on telescope designs, and his focus on the matter eventually resulted in him being booted from the monastery.

Dobson then became a powerful promoter of amateur astronomy, using his telescope design and his enthusiasm to open up the skies for the masses, or at least that portion of the masses willing to turn off the television set for a while. As far as I know he didn’t seek to profit from the Dobsonian design, and it was taken up by a number of telescope manufacturers. The design is also used by many resourceful folks who build their own telescopes.

In 1968 Dobson was a founder of the San Francisco Sidewalk Astronomers, an outreach organization that spawned like-minded groups all over the world.

I am one of many grateful people who were, directly or otherwise, pulled into the world of amateur astronomy thanks to John Dobson’s efforts.

Although I took several astronomy courses in high school and college, it hadn’t occurred to me to buy a telescope. I just assumed that any capable telescope would be too expensive.

A few years ago, while taking a trip, I happened upon a gathering of sidewalk astronomers. One showed me the Orion nebula through his Dobsonian telescope. The view was impressive. As it turns out, the scopes didn’t cost nearly as much as I thought they would, so I finally realized that my book learning could be hitched to doing real, hands-on astronomical observing.

So, just what is a Dobsonian design? In this high-tech age we think that revolutionary designs must be complicated, but this case is just the opposite: It’s the simplicity of Dobson’s idea that makes it so good. It’s basically a wooden box structure that cradles the bottom of the telescope, and allows the user to point the telescope around, much like a pirate pointing a cannon. It is simple, it is cheap, and it is easy to use.

It’s certainly not the best design for every need, but for many of us it’s the best design for our needs.

Anyway, since we’re talking a bit of history here, I’ll mention another name: Isaac Newton. Among his many accomplishments, Newton (1643-1727) is credited with using mirrors to do the job of telescope lenses. As old as that design is, it’s still very much with us today. Since mirrors reflect light, these designs are known as “reflectors.” Logically enough, they’re also known as “Newtonian” designs.

At this point we can connect the dots to draw the whole picture: A Dobsonian telescope is simply a Newtonian telescope (imagine the tube that is a cannon’s barrel) that’s mounted in Dobson’s design of box (imagine the wooden base that a cannon barrel sits in).

This design scales well, both going up and going down. I’ve used teeny little Dobsonian scopes that will fit into a suitcase, and I’ve used giant Dobsonians that require climbing up a ladder in order to reach the eyepiece.

By **ED STEPHENS**

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Visit Ed at EdStephensJr.com. His column runs every Friday.



Amateur telescopes can be so capable that they’re downright spooky. Even a moderate-sized scope can see many hundreds of galaxies. True, most are just faint blobs in the eyepiece. But it’s still cool.

For the sake of perspective, I’ll mention that just 100 years ago nobody apparently knew that there were any other galaxies. Although other galaxies were certainly visible, nobody really knew what they were or how far away they were. Conventional wisdom was that our galaxy is the only one. The basic scale of things was only reckoned a matter of decades ago.

We now know that the universe has hundreds of billions of galaxies, many of which (such as ours) have hundreds of billions of stars. Some have as many as 1 trillion stars.

Meanwhile, some recent estimates hold that every star out there has, on average, one planet in orbit. Sure, that’s a rough guess in a wide range, and such planets are not visible with amateur equipment, but it’s food for thought anyway.

So it’s sure an exciting time to ponder the vast and great universe above. Thanks largely to Dobson’s efforts, being able to get a good look at it is not a rich man’s game. The real price of admission to the night sky is some healthy curiosity, though it doesn’t hurt to have a taste for strong coffee.

Fighting for democracy, but can’t vote for President

President Obama said in his 2013 State of the Union Address that “we are betraying our ideals” when any American is denied the right to vote because of where they live.

This month, as President Obama prepares once again to address the nation, nearly 600 soldiers from Guam are returning home after a nine-month deployment in Afghanistan. While these patriotic Americans answered the call to defend democracy overseas, they are denied democracy at home. When the 2016 general election rolls around, they will be unable to vote for President and will only elect a non-voting delegate to Congress.

During their first month of deployment in Afghanistan, two Guam soldiers, Spc. Dwayne Flores, 22, and Sgt. Eugene Agnon, 23, were killed by a car bomb. According to statistics from the *Washington Post*’s “Faces of the Fallen,” Guam’s casualty rates in Iraq and Afghanistan have been 450 percent above the national average. Perhaps that is because Guam ranks higher than any state in per capita recruitment rates. Fully 1 in 20 Guam residents are military veterans, according to the U.S. Census. During World War II, Guam endured a brutal enemy occupation that resulted in over a thousand civilian deaths. Today, Guam’s location on the doorstep to Asia contributes to national security, but also places its residents uncomfortably close to North Korea and other threats.

Guam’s residents are not alone though in being denied the right to vote for president. Neither can residents of Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and the Northern Mariana Islands. These five areas have a combined population of over 4 million, greater than about half the states and about the same as the six smallest states combined. In all, more than 20,000 military service members from these areas have served in Iraq and Afghanistan. More than 125,000 veterans call these areas home. Yet because of where they live, they do not have the same voting rights as other Americans.

It is unlikely that President Obama will have anything to say about these Americans in his 2014 State of the Union Address. But presidents and presidential candidates should think twice before ignoring them. First, they actually do participate in the presidential primaries, and were a factor in both the 2012 Republican Primary and the 2008 Democratic Primary. Mitt Romney campaigned in Puerto Rico and his son Matt Romney even campaigned in Guam. Second, over 5 million Americans living in the states have close ties to the territories. Over 850,000 Puerto Ricans live in Florida alone—the 2012 election was decided in Florida by just 75,000 votes. Another 600,000 live in the swing states of Ohio, Virginia, Pennsylvania and North Carolina.

Voting rights for residents of U.S. territories should not be a parti-

By **NEIL WEARE**

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Neal Weare is president and founder of *We the People Project*.



san issue. On the whole, these are swing voters who value the importance of family and religion. Guam has elected as many Republican governors as it has Democratic ones, including its current governor, Eddie Calvo. Former Puerto Rico governor Luis Fortuno is a rising star in the Republican Party. Residents of these areas are primarily Latino, Asian, and Pacific Islander, groups both parties increasingly need to reach out to if they hope to win national elections.

Where you live, whether it is a state, territory or the District of Columbia, should not affect your right to vote. If residents of Guam and other U.S. territories are putting their lives on the line to defend democracy, they deserve to be its full participants. Our American ideals demand no less.

Six ways to save yourself from an abusive relationship

By **D. BRYANT SIMMONS**
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Excuses for domestic violence vary but they all have one thing in common—allowing the abuse to continue. Both victims and perpetrators make excuses, albeit for different reasons. Perpetrators want to maintain control over their victims and protect their image so often times they will shift the blame.

A battered woman will repeat the excuses told to her and convince herself that she believes them out of fear or desperation. She may be afraid of change—the prospect of building a new life apart from him might be more uncomfortable than the idea of staying. She might also be afraid of what he would do to her if she became confrontational. So his excuses become her excuses.

We’ve all heard these excuses before, variations of he didn’t mean to do it, he just got upset or he’s sorry, it won’t happen again. Implying that now they can put this little hiccup in the past and go back to being the perfect couple.

If you know someone who has been abused once, twice, or every day for 20 years prepare yourself to have an uncomfortable conversation with her. Tell her in private that no matter what she did or didn’t do, she doesn’t deserve to be treated in that way. She deserves to feel happy and safe in her home and every day of her life. Tell her that real love doesn’t leave scars and that’s what you wish for her.

Best case scenario is she agrees with you but is unsure about how to leave.

If she denies that it’s happening, then she’s not ready to leave but take heart in knowing the time will come when she is ready. So, remind her how much you care about her and confirm that you will always be there for her, no matter what.

If she makes excuses for the abuser, impress upon her how im-

portant her safety is, that she shouldn’t trade it for anything. Suggest that she speak with a counselor that specializes in domestic abuse. If she seems open to this have the number for the National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-799-SAFE) with you and give it to her. If she’s concerned about legal matters or law enforcement, she needs to speak with an attorney that has experience in domestic abuse cases. There are many websites to help battered women located attorneys in their price range. For example, <http://www.womenslaw.org/> has resources for every state in the US.

If you are involved with someone that is verbally, physically, sexually, or emotionally abusive and you’ve had enough, here are six steps to save yourself from an abusive relationship:

1. Find someone to confide in. Someone who does not have direct contact with your significant other or who is loyal only to you. Share with this person what you’re going through and decide on a code phrase that means you want them to call the police for you. Do not involve anyone other than your confidant in your plans to leave. Don’t tell anyone (including your kids) any more than they need to know at the time they need to know it.
2. Know his schedule as well as your own. Know how long it takes him to get from work to home and the same for you. If he checks up on you throughout the day be prepared for this.
3. Gather your things. Any important documents like birth certificates, deeds, social security cards, bank records, wills etc. for yourself and your children. Get as much cash as you can without alerting your significant other and pack a bag with these items, an extra set of keys, any medications, and some clothes in a safe place that he can’t get to. If you have evidence of the abuse—photos, hospital records, journal entries—pack that too.
4. Speak to a lawyer that specializes in domestic violence in your state, especially if there are children involved. She can help you get a restraining order, prepare custody arrangements, and any other

legal matters that may arise.

5. Find a shelter or a place to relocate to if you are financially able. The Internet is a wonderful resource. Remember to clear your browser history if you use the home computer. Then leave when he least expects it.

6. Keep your new address secret. Have your new phone number blocked. Change your cell phone number. Never share any information on social media about where you’ve moved to or what’s in your area. Stay safe.

Find a girl, any girl, she doesn’t have to be related to you. Let her know that she matters, that her voice matters. Listen to her. Empathize with her. Encourage her to love herself just as she is and to express herself in whatever means are most comfortable for her. Empower her to expect the same kind of support from everyone who claims to love her. Teach her to set boundaries and resolve conflicts. And celebrate her when she does the right thing.

Find a boy, any boy, he doesn’t have to be related to you. Let him know it’s okay to feel every emotion on the spectrum and show him how to express them in a healthy way. Encourage him to help others even when it doesn’t benefit him and to speak out when he sees injustice. Help him to understand that his pride is no more important than anyone else’s. And celebrate him when he does the right thing.






Now think bigger. Start an educational and mentoring program at a high school or elementary school. Create a documentary or short film about abuse. Start a petition to strengthen the domestic abuse laws in your state. Donate time, food, clothing, or money to local shelters. Bring someone else on this journey with you—child or adult. Tell the uncomfortable truth and most importantly never give up.

D. Bryant Simmons is the author of a new book, How to Knock a Brave Bird From her Perch. For more information, visit <http://www.dbryantsimmons.com>.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
				
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Southwest winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲ 86° ▼ 76°	▲ 85° ▼ 75°	▲ 85° ▼ 75°	▲ 86° ▼ 76°	▲ 86° ▼ 76°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	▲ 84 ▼ 77
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲ 85 ▼ 76
Yap	Thunderstorms	▲ 89 ▼ 76
Chuuk	Cloudy	▲ 85 ▼ 80
Pohnpei	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 84 ▼ 79
Kosrae	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 84 ▼ 79
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲ 85 ▼ 80

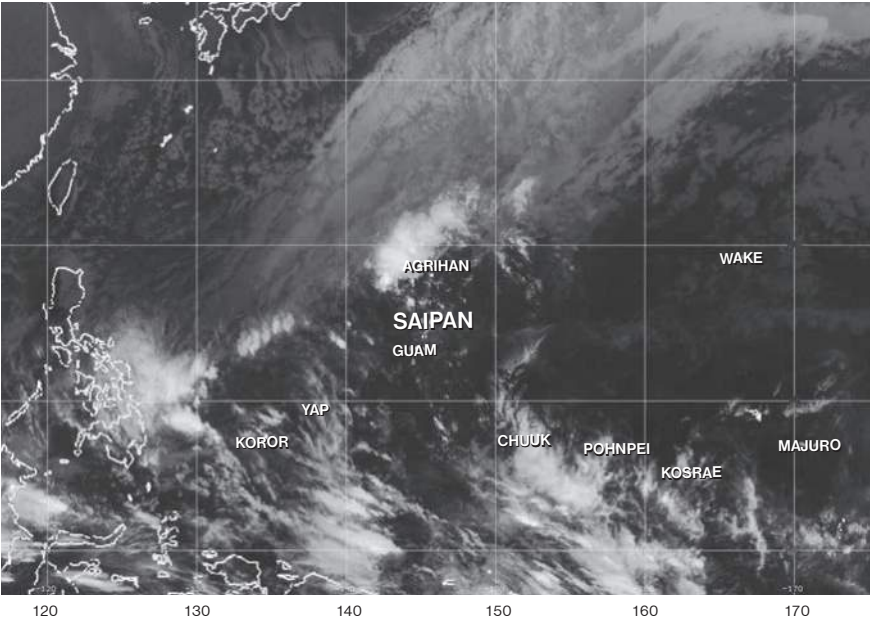
Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Sunny	▲ 73 ▼ 65
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	▲ 44 ▼ 20
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	▲ 69 ▼ 62
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲ 77 ▼ 64
London	Showers	▲ 46 ▼ 44
Los Angeles	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 75 ▼ 48
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲ 83 ▼ 70
Melbourne	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 67 ▼ 52
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲ 69 ▼ 49
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲ 19 ▼ 16
Osaka	Cloudy	▲ 55 ▼ 46
Paris	Partly Cloudy	▲ 42 ▼ 40
Pusan	Showers	▲ 55 ▼ 36
Rome	Rain	▲ 51 ▼ 39
Salem	Cloudy	▲ 53 ▼ 30
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲ 66 ▼ 43
Seoul	Showers	▲ 42 ▼ 22
Tokyo	Cloudy	▲ 56 ▼ 43
Washington, DC	Sunny	▲ 26 ▼ 19

Tides

Saipan Harbor			
12:53 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.4 Feet
6:30 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.7 Feet
12:52 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
8:11 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.3 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 2014

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A nearly stationary front extends southwestward from 25N156E through the far northern CNMI at 20N144E to a circulation centered at 17N140E then continues as a cold front to beyond 130E at 11N. Extensive cloud cover and scattered showers are seen along and up to 700 miles north of this boundary. A near-equatorial trough stretches southeastward from between Yap and the Marianas at 12N141E to south of Pohnpei at EQ160E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are present south of Chuuk and southwest of Pohnpei between the equator and 7N from 150E to 160E. Similar weather is found south of Yap between the equator and 4N from 137E to 143E. Trade-wind convergence is generating scattered showers a few thunderstorms southeast of Majuro but over Tarawa and Butaritari atolls or south of a line from 2N170RE to 7N180.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:47 AM	6:11 PM
Saturday	6:47 AM	6:11 PM
Sunday	6:47 AM	6:12 PM
Monday	6:47 AM	6:13 PM
Tuesday	6:47 AM	6:13 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	11:50 AM
Saturday	12:46 AM
Sunday	1:43 AM
Monday	2:42 AM
Tuesday	3:42 AM

Note: Blank spaces indicate that a rising or a setting did not occur during that 24-hour interval.

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The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
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- SAMUT SARI Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

CAMPUS BULLETIN

Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

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- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
- To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 3, 2013

DEPARTURES	ARRIVALS
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM) UA5070 4:15am 5:05am Daily UA5068 8:40am 9:30am Daily UA5039 1:35pm 3:10pm 1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota UA5038 2:20pm 3:10pm 2, 3, 6 UA5078 6:05pm 6:55pm Daily UA5072 9:50pm 10:40pm Daily	GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN UA5069 2:45am 3:35am Daily UA5071 7:15am 8:05am Daily UA5039 12:10pm 1:00pm 1, 4, 5, 7 UA5038 12:10pm 1:50pm 2, 3, 6 via Rota UA5077 4:45pm 5:35pm Daily UA5079 8:30pm 9:20pm Daily
SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP) UA5039 1:35pm 2:10pm 1, 4, 5, 7	GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP) UA5038 12:10pm 12:45pm 2, 3, 6
ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM) UA5039 2:40pm 3:10pm 1, 4, 5, 7	ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN UA5038 1:15pm 1:50pm 2, 3, 6
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX) OZ119 4:00am 6:40am Daily	OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN OZ120 9:50pm 2:20am+1 Daily
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT) DL287 6:00am 8:40am Daily DL297 4:30pm 7:20pm Daily	NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN DL298 10:25am 3:00pm Daily DL288 8:55pm 1:30am+1 Daily
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS) OZ608 3:10am 6:20am 1, 4, 5, 7	BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN OZ607 9:00pm 1:50am+1 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN) OZ606 2:10am 6:00am 1 D2102 2:20am 5:50am 3 OZ606 2:40am 6:30am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 OZ6063 3:30am 7:20am 4, 7 (will increase eff Jan 29) D2104 2:00pm 5:30pm 6 OZ604 3:20pm 7:10pm Daily	SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN D2101 8:30am 2:00pm 3 OZ603 9:00am 2:20pm Daily D2103 7:30pm 1:00am+1 6 OZ605 7:40pm 1:00am+1 7 OZ605 8:10pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 OZ6053 9:10pm 2:30am+1 3, 6 (will increase eff Jan 29)
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG) 3U8648 6:10am 8:40am 1, 4, 5, 7	SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN 3U8647 10:40pm 5:00am+1 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK) MU764 4:00am 8:00am 1, 5	BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN MU763 7:20pm 3:00am+1 4, 7
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN) 3U8646 4:20am 7:30am 2, 6	GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN 3U8645 7:40pm 3:00am+1 1, 5
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL) OZ606/701 2:10am 11:15am 1 via ICN OZ606/701 2:40am 11:15am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN UA5070/191 4:15am 9:05am 3, 6 via GUM DL287/473 6:00am 10:55pm Daily via NRT UA5068/PR111 8:40am 4:45pm 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM UA5039/183 1:35pm 9:30pm 5 via Guam UA5039/183 1:35pm 9:50pm 1, 4, 7 via Guam UA5038/183 2:20pm 9:30pm 2 via GUM UA5078/183 6:05pm 9:50pm 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM OZ604/703 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN	MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN OZ704/603 12:10am 2:20pm Daily PR110/UA5072 7:35am 5:35pm 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM DL172/288 7:45am 1:30am+1 Daily via NRT UA190/5077 9:55am 5:35pm 2, 7 via Guam UA190/5079 10:00am 5:35pm 3, 6 via GUM OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN UA184/5071 10:55pm 8:05am+1 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM UA184/5071 11:59pm 8:05am+1 2, 5 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG) OZ606/721 2:10am 11:50am 1 via ICN OZ606/721 2:40am 11:50am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN UA5068/179 8:40am 10:35pm 1, 5 via GUM UA5038/179 2:20pm 10:35pm 3, 6 via GUM OZ604/749 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN	HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN OZ746/603 12:30am 2:20pm Daily via ICN OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ724/605 1:50pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN UA180/5071 11:10pm 8:05am+1 1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; VLK: Vladivostok Air; SYL: Yakutia Air; D: Dynamic Airways.

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
Guam-Rota				FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan							
FRE 1750	17:50	18:20	Daily	Tinian-Saipan			
Saipan-Rota				FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 400				FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily				
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily				



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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Loss of anchor investments

By **JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.**
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands.



The loss of key anchor investments in recent past has literally turned the CNMI into a torched desert land where nothing grows. We look around for an oasis, only to find them fearfully dry, if not nonexistent altogether.

The issue of reviving investment to the healthy level resembling the boom years of the mid-'80s is suspect at best, nowhere in sight at worst. Not when the CNMI is now called in various investment circles "corrupt" and a clueless "welfare state."

We could rebuild where the blind leads the blind, inching revenue generation into paltry sums annually. Without an organized plan with realistic strategies on investment involving the thoughtful process with vision and commitment, it is futile.

It's a dreadful journey that requires more than the useless skills of technocrats who obviously lack the vision to shift paradigms from bankruptcy to prosperity. The dark clouds of fear steadily descend as we second-guess our way in the dark alleys of persistent mediocrity.

People pine for leadership, any leadership that would forge a pathway out of familial economic misery. The huge loss in the buying power of families clearly depicts unprecedented hardship never before seen in our developmental history. Is this the price of failure?

Leadership has gone out to lunch far too long, donning the "business as usual" attitude, perhaps dazed at the task at hand: how to rebuild a disastrously listless economy.

Impeached former Republican governor Benigno R. Fitial toyed with plans from a small business group and legal eagles saying to each scheme, "This is it!" It depicts scattershot viewpoint hailing from statist politicians.

Cluelessness is in abundance, leaving the CNMI lacking in clarity and understanding of how much it has lost in foreign capital, its implications, and the consequence of a pile of debts inhibiting growth; the destruction and contraction of private industries from CUC's costly power bills while splurging in deficit spending.

Leadership is caught in a bad hangover in what's known as cargo cult mentality. It still looks around for its engine to fly its well-built

bamboo reed economic airplane. Woe! Would Christmas drops be next on the agenda?

If leadership were mindful of its fiduciary duty, specifically the disastrous state of the local economy, then it would have moved with rational expectations to ease the deepening mess at home. Nothing positive has happened. *A` Saina!*

When cost of living slams home

Exercised the power of detachment to understand the spiraling cost of living if only to measure its impact against what's left of my pension and how this scourge has adversely affected others with far less income. Very troubling!

Call the economic mess secular stagnation or depression but the suffering persists daily throughout households Marianas-wide.

"CUC" power bill is the daily mouthwash and top of the chart of "new expletives" since last year such that you could easily get viciously slammed for mentioning the name of the utility agency. The name CUC triggers invitation for unsolicited tango in places like Rota. You're better off talking about stray village dogs or a fishing trip to the reef.

Just for purposes of clarifying new costs that have started robbing families of their buying power. Let's say you're a retiree with a pension of some \$500 bimonthly. The 25 percent cut lowers your take home pay to \$375. Add 40 percent on the new health premium increase that saps your bimonthly income even more.

Definitely, the final take home pay is far less. This doesn't include the impending increase in food commodities, power rates that skyrocket every time we go to sleep at night. Collectively, these costs have negative effects on the buying power of families. It's troubling what most families have to endure, hoping the break of dawn is postponed indefinitely.

Families are faced with more egregious hardship when other obligations come into play, i.e., paying for the first family home, impending increase in food items, gasoline, among others. These added negative costs against the family purse while salaries remain the same for years or that you're one of those in the 52 percent category of underemployment. In other words, you have a job that pays within the federal definition of poverty level income. Not very encouraging, is it?

How do we ease this egregiously miserable condition in households Marianas-wide? The answer is dangling before the nose of the boys on the hill, though not sure if this is the usual fatal *mañana* of "advancing to the rear."

"I don't know Maria!"

Through the grapevines a threat abounds that the 25 percent cut would be restored. Sounds pleasing to the ear but highly unrealistic fiscally.

The administration can't even find the funds to meet the annual fee under the settlement agreement nor is it ready to pay off the \$18 million owed CUC by government agencies. It can't even meet paying off the \$13 million owed DB retirement members who withdrew their contributions or \$100 million for land compensation.

CHC is incapable paying the costly power bill of half-a-million monthly. The administration is also exploring piling more debts on the backs of our children with pension obligation bond to the tune of \$60 million to \$80 million. Where does restoration of the 25-percent cut fit in this dire fiscal radar?

Friends, no matter your political persuasion, our government is broke. It is for this reason that I've resolutely sought consideration of projects now at the entrance of Tanapag Harbor awaiting tugboat escort. It's loaded with anchor or permanent investments!

Isn't it true that we need investments to slowly retire secular economic depression? It needs decisive political resolve to begin moving the needle forward, no more, no less.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

'IT' will not be fair

Let us not forget that in March 2009, Eulogio Inos ordered the release of payment to an elderly landowner some hundreds of thousands of dollars for land compensation settlement without ensuring that all proper and required documentations are in place. What about the other landowners? At the time he stated that "details regarding this claim and settlement are on file with the Department of Public Lands." He lied because there isn't any settlement agreement on file.

Now this election year, Eulogio Inos is assuring landowners that he will be fair in future land compensation payments. Is he joking? Is this his admission of unfairness in the past? This fairness assurance is nothing but another "wolf bearing gifts" to make landowners believe they will be paid so they will vote for him. The problem is he is assuring landowners "compensation payments [will be made] once money becomes available" in the future. When will this be—five, 10, 20 years from today? Many of the landowners have passed away! Landowners were expecting at the hearing to hear when they will get paid their rightful land compensation. Instead they heard lawmakers blaming each other where is the \$40 million that was supposed to pay for land compensation. Pay them now, there is money. Stop lying again. "IT" is so unfair!

Jesus I. Taisague
Koblerville, Saipan



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** Kia Forte LX retail price \$18,995.00 less 20% downpayment. Financing at 7% APR for 60 monthly payments of \$300.90 or \$138.88 per paycheck based on 26 pay periods per year. Total deferred payment \$18,054.00.

UOG program aims to build capacity among Chuukese youth

»15 youth trained in brief tobacco intervention

In an effort to reduce tobacco use disparities among Micronesian youth, 15 Chuukese youth successfully completed the Brief Tobacco Intervention Skills Training Certification on Dec. 7, 2013.

The Basic Tobacco Intervention Skills Training Certification Program provides the skills necessary for those trained to conduct brief tobacco interventions with individuals dependent on tobacco and to assist them in quitting their tobacco use. The trainees have learned the skills to assess an individual's readiness to quit using tobacco and to provide appropriate materials and referrals to aid that individual. The BTI Program was adapted for use in Guam from the Arizona Department of Health Services, Tobacco Education and Prevention Program, which has been extensively tested and implemented across the state of Arizona.

This training was conducted as part of a project supported by the Guam Cancer Trust Fund and the National Cancer Institute funded, U54 minority institute partnership cancer research grant between the University of Guam Cancer Research Center and the University of Hawaii Cancer Center, titled, "Community Outreach to Reduce Tobacco Use Disparities Among Pacific Islander Youth on Guam."

The lead trainers were Dr. Annette David (UOG Cancer Research Center) and Peter Cruz (Guam Behavioral Health and Wellness Center, supported by facilitators, Angelina Mummert (UOG Cancer Research Center) and Juanito "Junjie" Zuasula.

Smoking prevalence among youth has been declining in the U.S. mainland and Guam. However, Guam rates have declined less rapidly than the U.S. median. According to the Guam

Substance Abuse Epidemiological Profile, tobacco consumption among adults and youth remains high in Guam. Statistics show that 1 of 4 adults and nearly the same number of youth in Guam currently smoke. Youth have reported smoking as early as middle school. Adult smoking rates in Guam (25.8 percent) are significantly higher than in the United States (18 percent). In 2011, 21.9 percent of Guam youth were current smokers, compared to only 15.4 percent of U.S. youth. Chewing tobacco with betel nut continues to be a growing concern.

Recent data supports the need for youth tobacco cessation services on Guam. The BTI training addresses this need by building capacity of trained youth providers in Guam. Trained youth are able to provide peer-to-peer brief tobacco cessation intervention at their schools and within their social settings.

The training was funded by the Guam Cancer Trust Fund and a community partnership initiative between the UOG Cancer Research Center U54 Pilot Program 2 (Community Outreach), and the University of Guam Chuukese Student Organization, the Guam Behavioral Health and Wellness Center Prevention and Training Branch, and the Department of Public Health and Social Services Tobacco Control Program. The co-principal investigators for U54 Pilot Program 2 are Drs. Neal Palafox (University of Hawaii Cancer Center) and Annette M. David (UOG).

For more information about this training or other trainings, contact the Prevention & Training Branch of the Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse at 477-9079 to 83 or visit www.peaceguam.org. You can also contact the Tobacco Prevention and Control Program of the Department of Public Health and Social Services at 735-7334. (UOG)

Hyatt to offer Chinese buffets to welcome Year of the Horse

Hyatt Regency Saipan is welcoming the Year of the Horse by offering customary Chinese fare to tie in with this traditional celebration at its Miyako and Kili Café and Terrace restaurants.

On Jan. 30 and 31, from 11:30am to 2pm, the renowned Japanese buffet at Miyako will feature Chinese-influenced dishes using the freshest ingredients and skilful cooking techniques. The lunch buffet is priced at \$35 per person. Club at the Hyatt members are welcome.

For dinner, Hyatt invites guests to savor customary Chinese delicacies in a sumptuous buffet at Kili Café and Terrace on Jan. 30 and 31, from 6pm

to 9pm. Guests can enjoy fresh noodle stations, dumplings, and even a Peking duck station.

The dinner buffet at Kili Café and Terrace is priced at \$55 per person, \$35 for Club at the Hyatt members. The buffet is inclusive of wine, beers, and iced tea.

Hyatt will also be ushering the Year of the Horse in style with a traditional lion dance at the hotel's lobby. The Chinese Association of Saipan will perform this traditional ceremony on Jan. 31 from 11am onwards.

Reservations can be made by calling Hyatt Regency Saipan at 234-234 or by visiting saipan.regency.hyatt.com. (Mark Rabago)



Brief Tobacco Intervention Skills Training Participants. Top row, from left: Jesse Puana, Hage-Ae Paul, Jefferson Kachuo, and Jake Alafanso. Row 2, from left: K.S. Alafanso, Ryan Kusto, Stephenie Singenes, Annette Hallers, Gloryann Sikau, and Deborah Haimin. Row 3, from left: Elua Mori, Yolanda Lucena Arechy, and Diana Uruman. Bottom row, from left: Peter Cruz (instructor), Juanito "Junjie" Zuasula (facilitator), Great Orichiro, Murriane Jorrine Setik, Deeanne Masaichy Bernard, Angelina Mummert (facilitator), and Dr. Annette David (instructor).

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

GOOD NEWS! U-LUCK POKER

is happy to announce that we are having a raffle to acknowledge all our valued customers. We want to express our deepest gratitude by having the following raffles.



2014 TOYOTA YARIS
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1st Prize
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2nd Prize
ROUND TRIP TICKET FROM SAIPAN TO SHANGHAI, CHINA
(2 WINNERS)
WORTH \$1000.00/EA.

3rd Prize
ONE WEEK ACCOMMODATION AT SUNSHINE GARDEN
(2 WINNERS)
WORTH \$623.00/EA.

4th Prize
SCOOTER
(2 WINNERS)
WORTH \$500.00/EA.

5th Prize
GIFT CERTIFICATE FOR SUNSHINE RESTAURANT
(2 WINNERS)
WORTH \$200.00/EA.

Please see the table chart below on how to get your raffle ticket

BET	STRAIGHT FLUSH	5 OF A KIND	ROYAL FLUSH
10 bet - 18 bet (\$0.05)	2 ticket	4 ticket	8 ticket
5 bet (\$0.25)	2 ticket	5 ticket	25 ticket
6 bet - 10 bet (\$0.25)	5 ticket	10 ticket	50 ticket
11 bet - 20 bet (\$0.25)	10 ticket	20 ticket	100 ticket
21 bet - 40 bet (\$1.00)	20 ticket	40 ticket	200 ticket

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RAFFLE DATE: APRIL 12, 2014

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

January 13, 2014

To All Our Valued Customers:

We would like to extend our utmost gratitude to all our valued customers by giving good prizes on our raffle promo, but unfortunately, the Department of Finance informed us that the regulations specifically limits the prizes to merchandise valuing less than \$35,000.00 and prohibits cash prizes.

We would like to express our deepest apology regarding the changes we've had to make in order for our raffle promo to go on.

We hope for your understanding and continued support.

U-LUCK POKER MANAGEMENT

Mosquito-borne epidemics: A cause of concern in the Pacific

NOUMEA, New Caledonia—The first locally acquired case of Zika virus infection that was detected in New Caledonia on Friday, Jan. 17, 2014, represents a new epidemic threat to the territory and the Pacific region, which is already affected by several epidemics of diseases transmitted by mosquitoes.

“We are concerned about the increase in the frequency and variety of epidemics of diseases transmitted by mosquitoes in the region over the years. They threaten more and more the health security of the Pacific populations and the world,” said Dr. Yvan Souarès, Deputy Director of the Public Health Division at the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

In 2012, the four serotypes of dengue fever virus (DENV-1, DENV-2, DENV-3, and DENV-4) were circulating in the region for the first time in a given calendar year.

Last year was marked by an unprecedented number and variety of epidemics of diseases

transmitted by mosquitoes: 11 dengue epidemics of three different serotypes, three chikungunya epidemics and one Zika virus epidemic were recorded in

the Pacific region. SPC’s Public Health Division closely monitors such situations in collaboration with regional partners from the Pacific Public

Health Surveillance Network, and assists Pacific Island countries and territories in their efforts to reinforce the surveillance and response to these epidemics.

“Though the Zika virus is known for widely circulating in Africa and Asia, the Pacific is the only region in the world to have a documented epidem-

mitted by mosquito bites. The best way to avoid these diseases is by protecting yourself against mosquito bites and destroying mosquito breeding sites. (SPC)

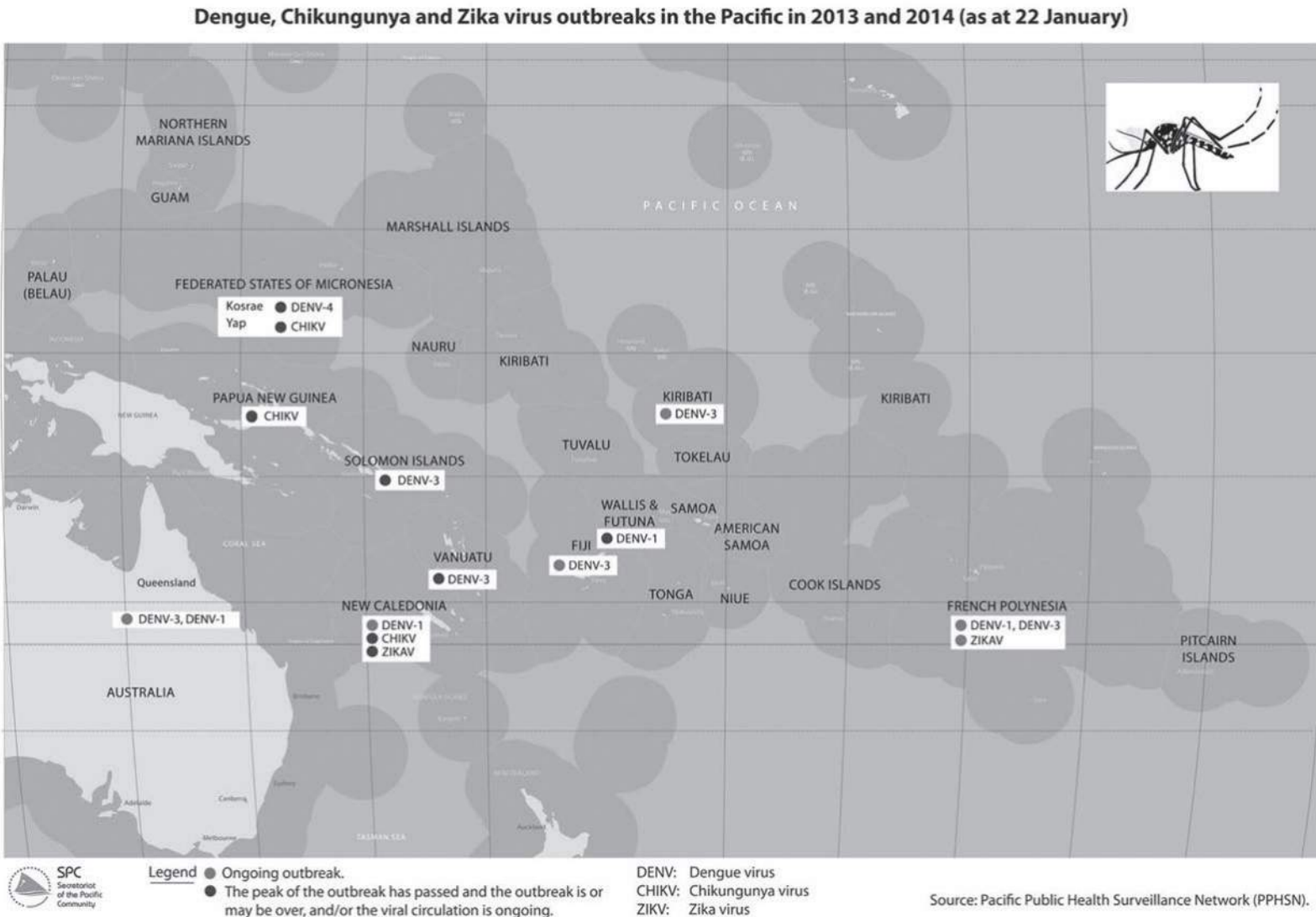
ic of this virus,” said Souarès.


The Zika virus first emerged in the Pacific in 2007 in Yap (Federated States of Micronesia). This was the first Zika virus epidemic detected and described in a timely fashion.

It re-emerged in the region in French Polynesia on the epidemic mode last year and it has now reached New Caledonia. There is a high risk that this disease could rapidly spread across New Caledonia and the region and affect a large number of people.

Epidemics of diseases transmitted by mosquitoes spread increasingly quickly with the amount of air traffic and weather variations (rising temperatures and modified rainfall patterns) we are experiencing these days.

The Zika virus disease is caused by a flavivirus of the same family as the dengue viruses, and it is trans-





**CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM – OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**

**INVITATION TO BID
ITB14-GOV-018**

**Marpi Public Cemetery Lawn Care Service
Marpi, Saipan**

Governor Eloy S. Inos and Lieutenant Governor Jude U. Hofschneider are soliciting sealed bids for the Marpi Public Cemetery Lawn Care Service, Saipan Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The project package will be available Tuesday, January 28, 2014 at the Governor’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Administrator’s Office, Juan A. Sablan Administration Building, Capitol Hill. A \$50.00 non-refundable fee for the project package will be assessed. All interested bidders are required to include an Insurer Certification Clearance (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC should be obtained at the Department of Commerce, Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) on Capitol Hill.

Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, as revised through May 24, 2001. Public Law 15-95 Local Preference Act, as amended by Public Law 15-118 does not apply to this Federally funded project. All wage rates for employees performing the work, labor and services on this project shall be paid at the current U.S. prevailing wage rates established for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

There will be a pre-bid conference/site visit for this project on Wednesday, February 5, 2014, 9:00AM ChST at the project site in Marpi, Saipan. All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 PM ChST February 7, 2014 to Mr. Carl Castro, Contracting Officer Technical Representative, Office of the Governor, Juan A. Sablan Administration Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, or faxed to (670) 664-2408. All responses to questions will be shared with other prospective contractors.

Sealed bids must be marked “**ITB14-GOV-018, Marpi Public Cemetery Lawn Care Service**”. For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, no later than 9:00 AM ChST February 24, 2014. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to Bid. Notices of Intent to Bid must be received by the Director of Procurement & Supply no later than 9:00 AM ChST February 24, 2014 and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than February 24, 2014 and must be received no later than March 5, 2014 ChST. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, at 10:00 AM ChST March 6, 2014. However, if no notices of intent to bid are received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at 10:00 AM ChST February 24, 2014.

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) a bid security of fifteen percent (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. Bid security shall be on a bid bond, in cash, by certified check, cashier’s check or other form acceptable to the government. A surety company shall hold the certificate of authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Checks must be made payable to the CNMI Treasurer, with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check: “Credit Account No. 44660”. If a bid bond is submitted it must be accompanied by an Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC).

The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations Section 70-30.3-245. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price for contracts greater than \$25,000.00.

Prior to the execution of the contract, the selected contractor shall submit:

- A current license from the bonding company showing that it has authority to issue bond in the CNMI, and
- A certification from the bonding company that the unencumbered value of its assets (exclusive of all outstanding commitments on other bond obligations) exceeds the penal amount of each bond.

A contractor submitting an unacceptable payment or performance bond may be permitted a reasonable time, as determined by the P&S Director, to substitute an acceptable bond prior to executing a contract.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not affect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.



**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**

ADDENDUM NO. 1

**RFP14-GOV-042 – TRUCKS WITH
DUMP BODIES**

The previously advertised notice, Request For Proposals (“RFP”) for the “Trucks with Dump Bodies” has been amended. The specific amendment is to extend proposal submission from Friday, February 7, 2014, 4:30 p.m., to March 10, 2014 4:30 p.m. (ChST) or Thirty (30) Calendar days and to include two forms. 1.DI 2010-Certification Regarding DOI Requirements. 2. NCA-1 Non-Collusion Affidavit.

All other elements of the RFP remain as originally provided. For further information on this project, please contact the Capital Improvement Office, during working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. – Monday through Friday, except holidays) or by contacting Mr. James R. Stump, Contracting Officer at (670)664-2375 or by fax at (670)664-2408.

Cousins accuse DOC's Mafnas, Castro of discrimination

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Two cousins are complaining of being harassed and discriminated against after Corrections Commissioner Ramon C. Mafnas and Department of Corrections director Gregory F. Castro removed them from their jobs without cause last month.

Edward M. Cepeda said that Mafnas and Castro sent him a letter separating him from service with DOC effective Jan. 14, 2014. Cepeda was hired as Corrections Officer 1 in July 2013.

Cepeda's cousin, Michael M. Salas, was terminated as a Corrections cadet last Dec. 17, about six days before their graduation.

Cepeda and Salas said they are going to file a discrimination complaint with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission against DOC, Mafnas, and Castro.

Saipan Tribune tried to obtain comments from Mafnas and Castro but they were not available. A DOC staff said she would relay the request for comment to the two officials.

Cepeda said that Mafnas and Castro wrote him separate letters removing him from his post but citing two different reasons.

Cepeda said that Castro's letter told him he made a couple of mistakes that compromised the health, welfare, safety and secu-

rity of the institution during his probationary period of employment. Cepeda said he was not aware of any mistakes he made so he wrote Castro to what these alleged mistakes were.

Mafnas, on the other hand, informed him that he was being terminated because of budgetary constraints.

Cepeda said that Castro refused to meet with him, while Mafnas informed him in the letter that there was no need for any further meetings as his decision was final.

Cepeda said that Castro's letter cited abandonment as one of his alleged mistakes.

"I never abandoned my job! In fact I have an average of 60 hours-plus of overtime," he said.

Cepeda said he will defend himself to retain his employment because that is his only source of income for himself and his son, a high school student.

Cepeda also alleged that DOC management has been committing several violations of the consent decree that it entered with the U.S. Department of Justice and that he and other Corrections officers can attest to it. He said one of the violations is the lack of hot water for inmates and detainees.

Cepeda pointed out that DOC has centralized air-conditioning and that letting the inmates shower without hot water "is inhumane."

Cepeda said he wants Gov.



FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Edward M. Cepeda, right, and his cousin, Michael M. Salas, hold some documents, including letters that Department of Corrections Ramon C. Mafnas and DOC director Gregory F. Castro issued terminating them from DOC. The cousins said they will file a harassment and discrimination complaint against the two officials.

Eloy Inos, lawmakers, and U.S. Department of Justice to know that DOC management has been violating the consent decree.

For his part, Salas said he is lost as to why he was terminated when he has already completed training, including

the on-the-job component.

Salas said that Castro told him in the letter that he did not "measure up to the standard."

Salas stated he was never absent and was late only once. He said Mafnas and Castro never talked to him.

Louie Richard Ueno Nigh makes it to Juniata College Dean's List

HUNTINGDON, PA—Juniata College has named 371 students to the dean's list for the 2013 fall semester. Each student must have at least a 3.6 grade

average out of a possible 4.0.

Louie Richard Ueno Nigh of Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, son of Richard Nigh and Yukari Ueno-Nigh and a 2011

graduate of GED General Education Diploma, was named to the 2013 fall dean's list.

Juniata College is a national liberal arts college located in

Huntingdon, Pennsylvania. With an enrollment of 1,550, Juniata is a community dedicated to providing the highest quality liberal arts education. *(readMedia)*



PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY CNMI GOVERNMENT



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL RFP14-DOC-051

"Development of the CNMI Consumer Assistance Program's Web Site and Consumer Web-based Database Application"

The CNMI Department of Commerce, Consumer Assistance Program (CAP), is seeking qualified proposals to develop and implement a web site and consumer web-based database application specific to the CNMI for the "Development of the CNMI Consumer Assistance Program's Web Site and Consumer Web-based Database Application".

The complete RFP packet will be available on or after **January 24, 2014** and may be picked up at the CNMI Procurement and Supply Office located in Lower Base Drive, Saipan.

Proposal procedures shall be in full compliance with Title 70 of the NMIAC CNMI Procurement Regulations, dated May 24, 2001, or latest revision thereof. All wage rates for employees performing the work, labor and services on this project shall be paid at the current U.S. prevailing wage rates established for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing to **Kaitlyn Neises-Mocanu** Consumer Assistance Program Advocacy Officer/Project Manager via email to **kaitlyn.mocanu@commerce.gov.mp** or via fax to: (670) 664-3067 no later than **4:30 p.m. local time, February 20, 2014**.

Proposals will be evaluated and scored based on the following criteria:

- Qualifications and Experiences: 30%
- Technical Merit/Response to RFP: 30%
- On-Site Availability/Commitment to Resources: 25%
- Cost: 15%

Award of the contract shall be made to the responsible offeror whose proposal is determined in writing to be most advantageous to the government taking into consideration price and the evaluation factors set forth in the request for proposal. No other factors or criteria shall be used in the evaluation.

Performance time for completion of the Development of the CNMI Consumer Assistance Program's Web Site and Consumer Web-based Database Application is for the **90 days** upon issuance of a Notice to Proceed. Proposal shall be valid for **60 days** after closure of RFP.

All proposals must be sealed and marked **RFP14-DOC-051** and in compliance with the Request for Proposal structure and include an original and five (5) hard copies and two (2) electronic copies and submitted no later than **10:00 a.m., local time, March 06, 2014** to:

Herman S. Sablan
Director, Procurement and Supply
Lower Base Drive
P.O. Box 510008 C.K.
Saipan, MP 96950

The Government reserves the right to reject any or all Proposals and to waive any imperfections in any Proposal in the best interest of the Government. All Proposals shall become property of the Government.

/S/ **SIXTO K. IGISOMAR**
SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

/S/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
DIRECTOR, P&S

/S/ **KAITLYN NEISES-MOCANU**
CONSUMER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
ADVOCACY OFFICER/PROJECT MANAGER



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Office of the Executive Director



INVITATION FOR BIDS CUC-IFB-14-010

SAN ANTONIO AND GARAPAN SEWERLINE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the replacement of sewerline in San Antonio and Garapan, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The project consists, in general of the replacement of asbestos cement pipe (ACP) sewerline in Garapan and San Antonio area. The project is to replace approximately ± 1099 LF of existing 8-inch ACP, ± 887 LF of existing 12-inch ACP, ± 374 LF of existing 15-inch ACP, existing concrete manhole repairs, 6-inch and 4-inch service laterals connection, wastewater by pass pumping and road restoration. CUC requires the Project to be completed in **180 calendar days** from date of award of contract.

The project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA.

The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check, wire transfer or credit card in the amount of \$200.00 for one IFB package set. Prospective Bidders for this IFB must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division by February 5, 2014 to be considered.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by site visits will be held on **January 31, 2014 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.10, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and five (5) copies of the bid MUST be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "**CUC-IFB-14-010, San Antonio and Garapan Sewerline Replacement Project**", to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 14, 2014**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A Payment Bond of one hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bid in anticipation of a contract. This request and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. The contractor shall be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. All responses to this Invitation for Bids should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the bidder, awarded a contract.

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective bidders and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 05, 2014** to Manny B. Sablan, Manager, CUC Procurement & Supply Division, via email address **manny.sablan@cucgov.org** with a copy to LCDR Brian Bearden, Senior Engineer, CUC Water/Wastewater Division via email address **brian.bearden@cucgov.org** and Birhen Martinez, Engineer, Water/Wastewater Division via email address **birhen.martinez@cucgov.org**.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and waive any defects in said bid proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

ALAN W. FLETCHER
Executive Director,
Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

MANNY B. SABLAN
Manager, Procurement & Supply
Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

DPRI team briefs NMI leaders on proposed live fire training ranges



SGT. JOHN RAUFMANN

From left, William Febuary, deputy director of the Defense Policy Review Initiative, Sheri R. Eng, Tim Robert, lead planner at Marine Corps Force Pacific, and Col. Philip J. Zimmerman, officer in charge of Marine Corps Activity Guam, answers questions from assembled local officials regarding the military use of Tinian and Pagan during a CNMI Joint Military Training Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement informational brief, Jan. 17, 2014, Saipan, CNMI.



SGT. JOHN RAUFMANN

Senior Executive Services Craig B. Whelden, executive director, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Pacific; Senior Executive Services Bryan H. Wood, director, Pacific Division of Plans, Policies, Operations department for Headquarters Marine Corps; Maj. Chris Merrill, operations officer of Marine Corps Activity Guam; and Roy Tsutsui, military and political adviser for Joint Region Marianas, walk to their meeting with the Lt. Gov. Jude U. Hofschneider on Jan 17, 2014.



SGT. JOHN RAUFMANN

Wesley Matthew Bogdan, legal counsel of Lt. Gov. Jude Hofschneider, meets with Senior Executive Services Craig B. Whelden, executive director, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Pacific; and Bryan H. Wood, director, Pacific Division of Plans, Policies, Operations department for Headquarters Marine Corps during an informational brief on Jan. 17, 2014, on Saipan.



SGT. JOHN RAUFMANN

Department of Lands and Natural Resources Secretary Arnold I. Palacios meets with members of Marine Corps Activity Guam and the Defense Policy Review Initiative team to further discuss the military use of Tinian and Pagan during a CNMI Joint Military Training Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement informational brief, Jan. 17, 2014, Saipan, CNMI.



SGT. JOHN RAUFMANN

Tinian Mayor Ramon Delacruz, center left, asks questions regarding the National Environmental Policy Act process during a CNMI Joint Military Training Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement informational brief, Jan. 16, 2014, Saipan, CNMI.



SGT. JOHN RAUFMANN

William Febuary, deputy director of the Defense Policy Review Initiative, explains the National Environmental Policy Act process to Lt. Gov. Jude U. Hofschneider, Senate President Ralph Torres, far right, Tinian Mayor Ramon Dela Cruz, left, and the representative for the Northern Islands Mayor, Jerome Aldan, during a CNMI Joint Military Training Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement informational brief, Jan. 16, 2014, Saipan, CNMI.

Lawmakers mull ideas on how to pay off land compensations

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rep. Tony Sablan (Ind-Saipan), House Ways and Means chairman, said Wednesday that his committee will be asking from the departments of Public Lands and Public Works a list of projects or private lands that still need to be taken by the government for public purpose, even as some \$100 million more in unpaid land compensation remains.

“Some of them are now under negotiation,” he said.

Sablan said in his view, one of the better sources of funds to be able to pay at least portions of the land claims is to tap future interest income from the Marianas Public Land Trust, which

invests money earned from public land leases, among other things.

Rep. Antonio Benavente (Ind-Saipan), House Natural Resources Committee chair, separately said there have been suggestions to float another bond to pay off land claims.

“But this is just among a few lawmakers talking. We are continuing to look for ways to be able to pay the landowners,” he said, adding that both the Natural Resources and Ways and Means Committee will meet again to further discuss land compensation and related issues.

To scrap or not
Lawmakers are now also con-

templating whether the government needs to scrap or reduce the unpaid land compensation’s 3 percent interest compounding every year.

Ramon S. Salas, DPL Land Claims Division director, said the 3 percent compounding interest raises the government’s total unpaid land compensation to \$100 million.

Rep. Janet Maratita (Ind-Saipan) doesn’t support removing the 3 percent interest because she said that would be unfair to those who have yet to get paid, while those who were already compensated for their land also got the interest payment.

Rep. Ralph Yumul (Ind-Saipan), for his part, said “it will

be difficult to abolish the interest when certain landowners were paid last year with full interest.”

“As lawmakers we try to ensure equitable payment of land claims,” he said.

A Manglona family in Nang Ocha had 0.54 square meter of land taken and certified in June 2001 for road project still has to wait up to today for government compensation. For such a small portion of land taken, the government has yet to pay a penny for 13 years. Other families have yet to get paid for 1 square meter to 10 square meters of land taken several years back.

Kannat Tabla payments
DPL said Wednesday that four of

the eight Kannat Tabla landowners who received payments from the government in 2013 under a 2008 local law had more lands taken by the government for right-of-way.

For example, the Pinaula family that got paid \$67,085.27 in July 2013 had a total of 1,148 square meters land taken by the government, and not only 365 square meters, which is the first of four lots owned by the family, on DPL’s list. The Pinaula family’s four lots had sizes of between 5 and 458 square meters.

An Agulto family that received \$31,414.85 in June 2013 had a total of 703 square meter lands taken, representing two lots—a 504 square meters and a

199 square meters. Another Agulto family that was paid \$30,741.11 in July 2013 had a total of 542 square meters of land taken, involving five lots—one is 504 and the other, 199 square meters.

Lastly, a Bowie family that was paid \$2,492.15 in July 2013 had a total of 44 square meters of land, involving two lots.

DPL’s Salas said based on the department’s records, there are 191 Saipan private landowners still waiting to get paid for the government’s taking of their property for road or right-of-way purpose, while 12 are for ponding basin on Saipan, 25 for wetlands also on Saipan, and 105 on Rota for right-of-way or road projects.

Labor warns tour agency for failing to meet 30 pct. local workers rule

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_deltorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Department of Labor has warned that it will sanction a tour agency if it fails to remedy its failure to hire U.S. citizens and permanent residents enough to meet the 30 percent workforce requirement.

Labor administrative hearing officer Jerry Cody ordered Hana Tour Service Inc. to arrange for its president, In Taek Hwang, to meet with James Ulloa of Labor’s Citizen Job Availability and Job Placement Section at a date to be arranged.

In an administrative order on Tuesday, Cody also ordered Hana Tour’s manager Jong Bong Won and its accountant, Gina S. Sanchez, to attend the meeting in order to devise a workforce plan to move toward achieving the 30-percent requirement under CNMI law.

Cody directed the tour agency to post all job vacancies and

job renewals in the future on Labor’s website.

Cody said his office will retain jurisdiction of this case until it receives written notice from Labor’s Citizen Job Placement Section that Hana Tour has complied with the terms of the order.

“If respondent fails to comply with the terms of this order, respondent shall be subject to monetary and other sanctions in an amount to be determined at a later hearing,” he warned.

According to Labor records, its Enforcement Section conducted an on-site compliance inspection of Hana Tours’ business on Jan. 15, 2013, and served the company with a document request, called the “Business Establishment Compliance and Monitoring Report.”

On Jan. 31, 2013, the company produced the requested documents—a total listing of workforce statement of compliance, a copy of two latest

quarterly employer’s withholding tax, payroll summary, map of business location, business license, and annual corporate report.

On Feb. 4, 2013, Labor’s Enforcement served Hana Tours with a notice of warning, informing the company that it was not in compliance with the 30 percent requirement. At the time, the company had 32 employees, consisting of zero U.S. citizens, two permanent residents, and 30 foreign workers.

The notice instructed the company to contact Labor’s Citizen Job Placement Section for assistance in obtaining referrals of U.S. citizen applicants or making other arrangements to meet the 30 percent U.S. workforce requirement.

In the nine months following February 2013, Hana Tours hired several U.S. citizens and permanent residents, including two persons referred by Labor’s

Citizen Job Placement Section.

Even with these hirings, though, the workforce percentage never approached the 30 percent level mandated by CNMI law, Cody said.

He said that in November 2013, Labor’s Citizen Job Placement Section made several calls to the company to determine whether it had devised a workforce plan, but the employer failed to respond.

Accountant Suarez testified that their president makes all hiring and firing decisions and that the president had been off-island at the time Labor made inquiries.

Labor’s Citizen Job Placement then referred the matter for investigation to Labor’s Enforcement Section.

Labor’s Enforcement Section concluded that Hana Tours had been uncooperative and non-compliant with labor laws, rules and regulations with respect to recruiting eligible U.S. workers

and permanent residents.

Cody conducted a compliance agency case on Jan. 15.

Cody said that under Commonwealth law, every employer is required to make good faith effort to recruit eligible U.S. workers and permanent residents in sufficient force to meet the targeted 30 percent of its total workforce.

He said Labor recognizes that it may take some employers time and effort to achieve that goal. Therefore, he said, Labor’s Citizen Job Placement Section is willing to work with employers to devise a long-range plan to bring them into compliance over a period of time.

In this case, Cody said, Hana Tours failed to post all job listings on Labor’s website and neglected to submit a workforce plan or to meet with the Citizen Job Placement Section for help in creating a workforce plan.

On a positive note, Cody said, the company did hire sev-

eral citizens and one additional permanent resident in 2013, improving its percentages slightly.

One difficulty here, Cody said, is that 22 of the 32 jobs in Hana Tours’ workforce are tour guide positions that require fluency in the Korean language, as these guides deal directly with Korean tourists.

Cody said these 22 positions will be difficult to fill with U.S. citizens or permanent residents given the foreign language requirement.

However, he said, several other positions, such as accounting jobs, may be filled with local hires.

In any event, Cody said, Hana Tours must cooperate with Labor by demonstrating that its upper management, not just its accountant, is willing to meet with personnel from Labor’s Citizen Job Placement Section to devise a workforce plan to bring the employer into compliance with the law.

BRUCE L. MAILMAN, F0153
MAYA B. KARA, F0169
MAILMAN & KARA, LLC
PMB 238 PPP, Box 10,000
Saipan, MP 96950-8900
Telephone: 233-0081
Facsimile: 233-0090

ATTORNEYS FOR PLAINTIFF
LPP MORTGAGE, LTD.

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT
OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN
MARIANA ISLANDS**

LPP MORTGAGE, LTD.,)
Plaintiff,)
-v-)
MICHAEL P. KILELEMAN)
and JULITA ANN TAGABUEL,)
fka JULITA T. KILELEMAN,)
Defendants.)

TO: JULITA ANN TAGABUEL
fka JULITA T. KILELEMAN
155 Ireland Road
Bayboro, North Carolina 28515

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is given to you herewith, within twenty (20) days after service of this Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to MAILMAN & KARA, LLC, the Plaintiff's attorneys, whose address is PMB 238 PPP Box 10000, Saipan, MP 96950, as soon as practicable after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Court for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Guma Hustisia, Susupe, Saipan. It may be prepared and signed for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of Court by messenger or mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file an answer in accordance with this Summons, judgment by default may be taken against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint.

By order of the above Court:

/s/CLERK OF COURTS

DATED this 27th day of December, 2013.

MICHAEL A. WHITE, ESQ. F0122
THE LAW OFFICES OF MICHAEL A. WHITE, LLC
POST OFFICE BOX 5222
SAIPAN, MARIANA ISLANDS 96950
TEL: (670) 234-6547 • FAX: (670) 234-9537

ATTORNEY FOR Plaintiff

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**

NORTHERN MARIANAS
HOUSING CORPORATION,
Plaintiff,
-v-
LYDIA R. SASO, RYO SASO,
and MARIANA R. CONCEPCION,
Defendants.

**CIVIL
ACTION
NO.
13-0211**

SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION

TO: LYDIA R. SASO and RYO SASO,
Defendants:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy which is served upon you hereby, within twenty-one (21) days after the fourth publication of this Summons, and to deliver or mail a copy of our answer to THE LAW OFFICES OF MICHAEL A. WHITE, LLC, the Plaintiff's attorney, whose address is Post Office Box 5222, Saipan, MP 96950, as soon as practicable after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan. It may be prepared and signed for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice.

If you fail to answer in accordance with this Summons, judgment by default may be taken against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint.

Dated December 27, 2013 by order of the Court:

/s/Clerk of Court

POI Aviation invites qualified individuals to apply for the following positions:

Aircraft Service Agent (1)
High school diploma or its equivalent with 2 years experience working on aircraft interior and exterior cleaning.

Assistant Manager, Passenger Service (1)
Associate's degree with 6 years of progressive experience in airline passenger service. Minimum 3 years experience in passenger service supervisory capacity.

Lead Cargo Agent (2)
High school diploma or its equivalent with 4 years experience as a cargo handler.

Manager, Aircraft Maintenance & GSE (1)
Associate's degree in Aviation Maintenance Engineering with 10 years of progressive work experience as a licensed A&P Technician and 2 years work experience as auto and diesel mechanic. Must possess a current U.S. FAA A&P license.

Manager, Ramp & Flight Operations (1)
Associate's degree with 8 years progressive airline ramp operations and flight dispatch experience. Minimum 3 years work experience in ramp operations supervisory capacity. Must possess a current U.S. FAA license as Aircraft Dispatcher.

Ramp Agent (1)
High school diploma or its equivalent with 2 years work experience in the airline industry in relations to ramp cargo loading and unloading operations.

Senior Load Planning Specialist (1)
Associate's degree with 4 years of aircraft ramp operation experience with specific airline certification as a load planner.

DEADLINE: JANUARY 30, 2014

Applications for Employment are available at the Human Resources Department located at the POI Aviation Building on International Terminal LP, Saipan International Airport.

Equal Employment Opportunity Employer

**BEFORE THE COMMONWEALTH PUBLIC
UTILITIES COMMISSION**

**NOTICE OF BUSINESS
MEETING**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission will conduct a business meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, January 27, 2014 at the Commonwealth Development Authority (CDA) Conference Room, located in Room# 104 of the CDA Building on Beach Road San Jose, to consider the following agenda. Public attendance is welcome. Reports and other documents relevant to the agenda will be available at the meeting for public inspection. Questions regarding the agenda should be referred to Ms. Lillian Tenorio, Esq., who serves as counsel to the Commission's regulatory consultant, at 670-234-7850.

AGENDA

- Administrative matters:**
 - Call to order; approval of agenda; determination of quorum
 - Approval of minutes of December 10, 2013 business meeting
 - Administrative order – Supplemental Rules –Review of Customer Complaints
- Docket 13-01: CUC Electric Division**

Deliberation on the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation's July 5, 2013 petition for rate relief, as amended, including the docket record and Hearing Examiner's December 24, 2013 report.
- Other business**
- Public comments**

Habele donates dictionaries to Pohnpei schools

A South Carolina based nonprofit has sent a thousand English language dictionaries to the picturesque island of Pohnpei. It's one of four states in the Central Pacific Ocean that make up the string of islands called the Federated States of Micronesia. The dictionaries include an abbreviated atlas, something local island students can use to learn more about distant North American geography.

This unique donation is enough to provide every eighth grade student across Pohnpei State with something previously unheard of—a dictionary of their very own.

More than 40 boxes of books will soon arrive in the Pohnpeian city of Kolonia. They will be distributed to the 900 eighth-grade students who are enrolled in the roughly 30 public schools across Pohnpei and its outer islands. Dictionaries are also en route to eighth grade students at the Pohnpei SDA School, Calvary Christian Academy, and the Pohnpei Catholic School, as well as readers at the downtown



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A thousand English language dictionaries are now en route to the picturesque island of Pohnpei, courtesy of Habele.

public library.

The donation is particularly meaningful as Pohnpei, like all the isolated islands in the Central Pacific, struggles with economic and educational challenges. Among those lucky enough to enroll in the nation's two-year community college system, only a tiny fraction will earn a degree, according to recent data from the U.S. government. Per-capita income remains under \$3,000 per year and many families still rely on subsistence fishing and farming.

The donation was organized by Columbia based "Habele," a group of former Peace Corps volunteers who served as teachers in Micronesia. They partnered with Ray and Barbara Dalio of Connecticut. Their Dalio Family Foundation provided the vision and support to design and implement the project.

Larry Raigetel, a Habele volunteer from nearby Yap State, helped piece together the effort. "This donation is exactly what local educators and librarians

told us they needed. It's a huge opportunity, particularly those students struggling with generational poverty."

Raigetel is also the founder of "Waa'gey" a nonprofit in Yap that works to preserve traditional skills, and has partnered with Habele on projects in that state. He spent several weeks in Pohnpei this winter working to develop plans for the donation of the dictionaries.

South Carolina-based charity Habele has been working in Micronesia since 2006. In addition to coordinating donations of text, reference and reading books, the group awards scholarships and provides support to community-based after school programs. These include traditional dugout canoe carving (through the Waa'gey organization) and Micronesia's first ever-high school robotics team exhibition. Late last year, Habele created a computer lab for Our Lady of Mercy Catholic High School and provided cases of donated books to the Pohnpei Public Library. *(Habele)*

Arrest warrant out vs ex-cop for allegedly using 'ice' again

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The federal court issued yesterday a warrant for the arrest of former police officer Florencio Q. Richards after the U.S. Probation Office found him allegedly using methamphetamine or "ice" again and violating other terms and conditions of his probation.

U.S. Probation Officer Margarita Wonenberg asked the

U.S. District Court for the NMI yesterday to revoke Richards' supervised release for violating the terms and conditions of his probation.

Richards has been on three years of supervised probation since Feb. 20, 2013, after serving a 12-month prison term for conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine or "ice," distribution of "ice," and possession of a firearm by a prohibited person.

According to Wonenberg, Richards used "ice" on Dec. 30, 2013, failed to report to a probation officer, failed to follow the instructions of the probation officer, and failed to participate in a substance abuse treatment program.

Wonenberg said Richards tested presumptive positive for "ice" during a random drug test on Dec. 31, 2013. When confronted with the results, he allegedly admitted to using the drug a day before, saying he was stressed

about personal issues.

The probation officer noted that this was Richards' fourth positive drug test within one year.

As a result of his admission to drug use on three previous occasions, his supervised conditions

were modified last June 14 to include three months of home detention.

In August 2011, the federal court imposed a 24-month prison term on Quitugua for distributing "ice" while he was still an active officer.

Governor signs 3 local laws, 1 customs law

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

In the presence of lawmakers and other government officials, Gov. Eloy S. Inos signed into law yesterday afternoon a bill establishing the exit of the U.S. Post Office as an official customs entry point so that taxable goods and prohibited contraband coming in via mail will be subject to customs checks. The governor also signed three local laws naming a beach in San Antonio, renaming a street in Chalan Kanoa, and amending the Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

Rep. John Paul P. Sablan's (Cov-Saipan) House Bill 18-160, which establishes an official customs point of entry, is now Public Law 18-33.

Customs Services Division

officers have limited authority to inspect mail when it arrives at the airport. When a package or letter is delivered to the U.S. Postal Service, it remains under the custody of the U.S. Postal Service until it is delivered to the rightful addressee.

As such, for customs purposes, a package or letter entering the CNMI through the U.S. Postal Service does not officially enter the CNMI until it is until it is out of the U.S. Postal Service custody.

To address this, Sablan, along with eight others, introduced the bill establishing the exit of the U.S. Post Office as an official customs point of entry.

Customs Director Joe Mafnas, in a separate interview at the signing, said the authority to inspect mail is now by law and

this makes the Customs Services Division more confident, compared to previous authorization only by regulation.

Local laws

The governor also signed Reps. Ralph Demapan (Cov-Saipan) and John Paul Sablan's (Cov-Saipan) House Local Bill 18-30, renaming the newly-merged "Haiguas Lane" and "Niyok Drive" in Chalan Kanoa the "Tun Ben Kappan Road" in honor of the late Tun Ben Kappan and his contributions to Precinct 2 and the people of the CNMI.

The measure is now Saipan Local Law 18-11.

Inos also signed Rep. Tony Sablan's (Ind-Saipan) House Local Bill 18-33 into Saipan Local Law 18-12.

The new local law names the

public beach behind San Antonio Elementary School the "San Antonio Village Beach Park."

The governor also signed Rep. Ray Tebuteb's (Ind-Saipan) House Local Bill 18-38 into Saipan Local Law 18-13, amending the Saipan Zoning Law of 2013. It rezones an area from "village commercial" to "tourist resort."

Besides Reps. Tony Sablan, John Paul Sablan and Tebuteb, the other lawmakers present were Reps. Lorenzo Deleon Guerrero (Ind-Saipan), Christopher Leon Guerrero (Cov-Saipan), Mario Taitano (Ind-Saipan) and Felicidad Ogumoro (R-Saipan). Also present were Finance Secretary Larrisa Larson, Customs director Joe Mafnas, customs officers, and members of the Saipan Zoning Board.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

ATTENTION!

Saipan Southern High School Manta Ray Battalion performs color guard duties at the opening ceremony of the 2014 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day commemoration on Jan. 20, 2014, at the American Memorial Park Visitors Center Theater. From left to right: C/CPT Amante Andrada, C/CPT Kristofer Morales, C/CPT Jude Palacios, and C/Sgt. 1st Class Mendiola Sergio

Cleanup at Old Man by the Sea on Feb. 1

The Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality's Cleanup Brigade will be picking up trash at Old Man by the Sea on Feb. 1, 2014, starting at 8am.

Thanks to some volunteers the trail to Old Man by the Sea Beach has been cleared of overhanging branches for easy access. BECQ is calling for able volunteers to haul a bunch of marine debris from the beach.

If you would like to volunteer

your time to clean and beautify our island, meet the BECQ representatives on Feb. 1 at the Old Man by the Sea trail entrance at 8am. Volunteers will split into groups and clean until 10am and break for drinks and then continue, if needed.

This month, outstanding brigade volunteers who participated in at least 10 monthly cleanups will receive a brigade cap and those who participated in at

least three cleanups will receive a brigade t-shirt.

Last month's Pau Pau Beach cleanup was successful, with 29 volunteers participating. Thanks to, students from Smart Start Daycare, GTC, Tanapag, and William S. Reyes elementary schools, Grace Christian Academy, Marianas Baptist Academy, Saipan Southern High School YEA Club, CHC, KSPN News, PSS Central, Zoning, and other

volunteers, about 440 lbs of marine debris was removed from the beach and properly disposed of.

The BECQ is looking forward to a repeat success this Saturday, so join BECQ's monthly cleanup brigade and "Pick It Up!" Let us work together for the health of our coral reefs and cleanliness of our beaches for everyone to enjoy.

For more information about volunteering, please contact the BECQ office at 664-8500/1. *(BECQ)*

Judge orders continued detention of alleged HK fugitive

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona has ordered the continued detention pending trial of Wei Zeng, an alleged Hong Kong fugitive who was arrested last week when he reportedly tried to enter Saipan using a different identity.

At a detention hearing on

Wednesday, Manglona determined that Zeng poses a serious flight risk.

Manglona also found by a preponderance of evidence that Zeng, among other things, lied to the pretrial services officer that he never before traveled outside his country, the People's Republic of China, before 2014,

as it appears that he had a B1/B2 visa and his fingerprint is on file as a person who has previously entered the U.S.

Manglona remanded Zeng to the custody of the U.S. Marshal. Preliminary hearing will be on Jan. 30 at 1:30pm.

Assistant U.S. attorney Ross Naughton moved for the

continued detention of Zeng. Court-appointed defense counsel Bruce Berline opposed the motion.

Zeng was arrested after the U.S. government filed a complaint charging him with making a false statement to a federal agency.

According to Michael D. Lansangan, special agent with Homeland Security Investigations of the Department of Homeland Security, Zeng lied to U.S. Customs and Border Protection when he declared on his form I-736 that he has not previously applied for a U.S. immigrant or non-immigrant visa.

USCBP Form I-736 is a document that certain foreign-born, non-immigrant, non-visa holders visiting Guam or the CNMI must complete

prior to entry. It includes basic questions, such as whether the foreign-born national had ever before applied for a U.S. immigrant/non-immigrant visa, or whether the foreign-born national had ever been arrested for any offense or crime.

Special agent Lansangan stated in his affidavit that on Jan. 16, he and other HIS Saipan agents learned from USCBP officials that a Chinese national, Zeng, had arrived on Saipan from Shanghai, China, and sought admission to the U.S. under the conditional parole program.

Lansangan said that Zeng had presented a People's Republic of China passport to a USCBP officer, which identified Zeng as Zhiqian Liu with Feb. 5, 1963 as his date of birth.

Lansangan revealed that an electronic search or comparison

of Zeng's fingerprints collected by the USCBP officer on Saipan yielded a biometrics match to a Hong Kong national named Wei Zeng with Dec. 26, 1962, as date of birth.

Lansangan said Zeng also appeared to have been the subject of a U.S. visa revocation by the U.S. Department of State because he was a fugitive in Hong Kong.

USCBP officers discovered that Zeng also appeared to be a match to the subject of an active international police red notice.

Lansangan said the Interpol notice, which was published on Oct. 21, 2011, indicated that Zeng is a wanted fugitive from Hong Kong, and the subject of an arrest warrant or judicial decision from Hong Kong for bribery and conspiracy. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)



JLAB TEAM

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Kagman High School JROTC academic team is now qualified for the next round of the JROTC Leadership Academic Bowl competition. This event is for the Major General George C. Marshal academic challenge playoffs that will happen in late February 2014 in Virginia, USA. The subjects that they will be tested on include English, Algebra, Geometry, General Science, U.S. History, Current Events and Leadership. This is competition is a national event for all JROTC high school units.

Grow your own—banana plants available



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Banana plants are on sale from \$3 to \$7 through a partnership between Guam Dept. of Agriculture and the University of Guam.

The Tissue-culture Laboratory, a partnership between Guam Department of Agriculture and the University of Guam, announces new banana

plants for sale.

The Guam Department of Agriculture Tissue-culture Project is a collaborative effort to offer disease-free plant-

ing stock to local farmers and backyard gardeners. There are several popular varieties of bananas currently available including Dwarf Cavendish, Red Dacca, Dwarf French Plantain, and Williams. Prices range from \$3 to \$7 depending on the size of the pot.

Take advantage of this excellent opportunity to grow and harvest your own delicious bananas. The best time to visit the Department of Agriculture nurseries for purchasing banana plants is Monday to Friday, 8am-12pm or 1pm-3pm.

For more information contact Ric Lizama at 300-7974. (*UOG*)

GOOD JOB!

Congratulations to Juan "Johnny Horney" Cruz, for being selected as Employee of the Month of Blue Sky Supermarket. Keep up the great work! Greetings coming out from your Blue Sky Family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



In Celebration of Her New Life in Paradise

† Angelica Manglona Ogo

Affectionately known as "Mama Angie"

In Her New Life She Now Joins Her:

Husband: †Misael Hocog Ogo

Daughter: †Betty Jane Manglona Ogo

Parents: †Asuncion H. Maratita, †Crispin M. Manglona, & †Romano M. Maratita

Grand Mothers: †Ana Manglona, †Maria S. Hocog

Grand Fathers: †Jose Manglona, †Eugenio P. Hocog

Parents-in-Law: †Sebastian Ogo, †Joaquin Borja & †Rosa H. Borja

Brothers, Sisters: †Raimundo H. Manglona, †Beato T. Manglona, †Magdalena M. Inos, †Candido H. Maratita, †Clara M. Valdez

Sister-in-laws: †Isabel S. Manglona, †Maria H. Borja & †Remedio Borja

Nephew: †Aaron M. Suzuki

Grand Daughter: †Tafari Angelica S. Ogo

Her memories will forever live in the hearts of her:

Children: Michael M. & Daisy R. Ogo (Leslie, Mitchell, Monet); **Crispin M.** & Hera S. Ogo

(Sierra M. Valdez, Jovaney Subediang, Jonathan You); **Eugene M.** Ogo & Marylou B.

Quitugua (Beverly, Kaylah, Noah Cole, Eugene Jr., Aaron Sebastian); **Sarah Ann M. Ogo** &

Michael B. Manglona (Misael Keoni, Michael Jr., Christopher, Tiana Hope)

Reared Child: Peter J.C. Mesngon/Magdalena M. Cepeda (Joe)

Brothers, Sisters & In-Laws: **Guadalupe P.** Manglona (Raymond Castro, Modesta Lizama, Ross

Hugh S. Man-glona, Lorenza Itibus, Roddy Howell S. Manglona); **Carmelita I.** Manglona

(Michelle M. Quichocho, Wena I. Manglona, and Chris I. Manglona); (Christine/Rodney

Mendiola, Leilani/Jarrod Manglona, Candilyn); **Bonabe H.** & Imee E. Maratita (Rovien Bo,

Bryce Allen, Romano Vin); **Carmen M.** & Akilino Suzuki (Rae/Franklin: Aaron Cole);

Richard H. & Carmen C. Maratita (Roman John, Richard Jr.); **Delfina M.** & Edward C.

Barcinas (Lucretia/Carlos Talamantes, Edward C. Jr., Edmund John); **Jesus H.** & Cora

Hocog, Ignacio H. & Rose Borja, & Candido H. Borja

Mama Angie is additionally survived by numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews and Godchildren.

Nightly rosary is being said at Kristo Rai Church in Saipan at 7:00 p.m. until Friday, January 24th, 2014

On Saturday, January 25th, her body will be flown to Rota in the morning. Viewing prior to the flight to Rota will start at 7:30 a.m. at the CHCC Chapel. Rosary is concurrently being said at San Francisco De Borja Church in Rota at 7:00 p.m.

On Monday, January 27, 2014, Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 9:00 a.m. at the San Francisco De Borja Church followed by Interment Service at the San Jose Cemetery in Songsong Village where we will bid our beloved †Mama Angie to an eternal rest in Paradise.

Un Dangkulu Na Si Yu'us Ma'ase

Ginen I Familia

World

Peace talks on Syria stuck over Assad's future

MONTREUX, Switzerland (AP)—Furiously divided from the start, representatives of Syrian President Bashar Assad and the rebellion against him threatened Wednesday to collapse a peace conference intended to lead them out of civil war.

Assad's future in the country devastated by three years of bloodshed was at the heart of the sparring, which took place against a pristine Alpine backdrop as Syrian forces and rebel fighters clashed across a wide area from Aleppo and Idlib in the north to Daraa in the south.

U.S. and U.N. officials said merely getting the two sides in the same room was something of a victory, but U.N. chief Ban Ki-moon's claim that the discussions were "harmonious and constructive" was at odds with the testy exchange when he tried to get

the podium from Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Moallem.

"You live in New York. I live in Syria," Moallem angrily told Ban. "I have the right to give the Syrian version here in this forum. After three years of suffering, this is my right."

With little common ground, the two sides were to meet separately Thursday with a U.N. negotiator, Lakhdar Brahimi, who said he still did not know if they were ready to sit at the same table when talks begin in earnest Friday. But, Brahimi said, both sides had shown some willingness to bend on local cease-fires and delivery of humanitarian aid, and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said they were also working on possible terms for a prisoner exchange.

The Western-backed opposition said Assad's departure was

their starting point, echoing the position laid out by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry.

"The resolution cannot be about one man's—or one family's—insistence on clinging to power," Kerry said.

The response from the government delegation was firm and blunt.

"There will be no transfer of power, and President Bashar Assad is staying," Syrian Information Minister Omran al-Zoubi told reporters.

The two sides seemed impossibly far apart in opening statements in the Swiss city of Montreux, famed for its stunning mountain views and mellow jazz festival. The waterfront road was barricaded by roadblocks and hundreds of security forces, with boats patrolling the shores of Lake Geneva day and night.

The small-town venue was chosen in haste when a watchmakers' convention left Geneva hotels booked. That made for some potentially awkward encounters—some of the opposition were staying in the same hotel as the Syrian government delegates, as were the Americans.

Complicating matters, Assad's delegates and the Western-backed opposition Syrian National Coalition both claimed to speak for the Syrian people. But the coalition has little sway with rebel brigades, who largely oppose talks with the government. And the government, Kerry said, has no legitimacy or loyalty among people devastated by war.

Overshadowing the conference was Ban's last-minute decision to invite—and then disinvite—Iran, which has funneled billions of dollars and Shiite fighters to

Assad. Syria's civil war has become a proxy battle for regional dominance between Iran and Saudi Arabia, which funds many of the Islamist rebel movements and which Assad accuses of supporting al-Qaida-inspired militants streaming into Syria.

"Those who are behind the acts of terrorism in Syria should choose between being an arsonist or a fireman. They cannot be both at the same time," said Syrian U.N. Ambassador Bashar Jaafari. He said Syria's government had offered a cease-fire in Aleppo, although he did not spell out the terms, and rebel commanders say the government has used past truces to buy time.

Following Jaafari's hour-long speech, the opposition refused to make final remarks, minutes after sending out a tweet about their preparations.

from those heady days before his first inauguration, when two-thirds of Americans predicted he'd be an outstanding or above-average president.

Now, 31 percent think he's been outstanding or above average, a quarter size him up as average, and 42 percent describe his presidency as below average or poor.

Poll: People see Obama as nice guy, so-so prez

WASHINGTON (AP)—Nice guy, so-so president.

Taking stock of President Barack Obama at the five-year mark in his term, less than a third of Americans consider him to be an above-average chief executive. Nearly twice as many find him likable.

A new Associated Press-GfK Poll finds the president's personal image to be on the rebound after taking a hit during the government shutdown late last year, with 58 percent now sizing him up as very or somewhat likable. That's up 9 percentage points from October, just after the shutdown.

Yet as Obama prepares to stand before Americans for his annual State of the Union address on Tuesday, people are largely pessimistic about the country's direction, down on the condition of the economy and doubtful it will bounce back anytime soon. Unemployment? Seventy percent think it will go higher or stay the same.

Obama "wasn't a total disappointment," allows Joshua Parker, a 37-year-old small businessman in Smyrna, Tenn. "He didn't put us into a Great Depression."

But Parker, a self-described political independent and conservative, suspects that someone who understood the economy better could have done more.

"He would probably be a guy I would like to hang out with if he wasn't president," says Parker. "But I like a lot of people who are not qualified to be president."

Across the country, Democrat Sabrina Carag, a 58-year-old retired accountant in Pleasanton, Calif., gives the president higher marks on both performance and personality.

If things aren't great in the country, this former Republican

reasons, it's the fault of her old party and the Republicans in Congress.

"They block him every step of the way," says Carag. "I don't think it's fair for them to say he's been a bad president. How can you do anything if

your hands are tied?"

From Huntsville, Texas, 51-year-old Wes Brummett thinks the economy will improve eventually—but it may be up to his grandchildren to do it.

Obama, this Democrat says, seems like an all-right guy and a

good dad, but "he needs to show more leadership."

"People are getting disheartened," says Brummett, a self-employed computer systems administrator.

On the cusp of his sixth year in office, Obama is far removed



RARE BLUE DIAMOND

Image taken Friday Jan. 18, 2014 and made available by Petra Diamonds shows a rare blue diamond that was found at the Cullinan Diamond Mine near Pretoria, South Africa. Petra Diamonds says the 29.6-carat diamond came from the Cullinan mine, source of some of the world's most famous diamonds. Petra Diamonds said the diamond is a vivid blue with extraordinary tone and clarity, and could yield a polished stone of great value. The Cullinan mine yielded the 530-carat Star of Africa blue diamond that is part of the British crown jewels.

AP

Thai protesters march as state of emergency begins

BANGKOK (AP)—As a state of emergency came into effect Wednesday in the Thai capital, defiant protesters marched on government offices and defaced the wall outside of national police headquarters, while a prominent government supporter in the country's northeast was the target of a shooting attack.

The government said it enacted the emergency decree to improve security and ensure that Feb. 2 elections, opposed by the protesters, are held without disruption. Officials declared there would be no crackdown on the demonstrators, who have seized several patches of the capital, and life in the city continued as normal with tourist sites unaffected and no major deployment of extra security forces.

The government announced the state of emergency late Tuesday in the wake of a string of attacks that have mostly been aimed at demonstrators protesting peacefully in Bangkok. Grenade assaults on Friday and Sunday killed one man and wounded more than 60 people, bringing the casualty toll since November to at least nine dead and more than 550 hurt.

Gunmen wounded a top leader of a pro-government movement in northeastern Thailand on Wednesday, in what many fear is a portent of increased violence if no negotiated solution is found to the political crisis.

Kwanchai Praipana was shot twice and hospitalized after gunmen in a pickup truck sprayed bursts of gunfire at his home in Udon Thani, according to Jatuporn Promphan, another leader of the "Red Shirt" group. The attackers have not been identified.

The emergency decree, which will remain in effect for 60 days, gives police expanded powers to make arrests, conduct searches and seize suspicious materials. The government said it imposed the measure in part to secure the city and because protesters have tried to shut down government offices and prevent civil servants from working.

"The caretaker government's enactment of the emergency decree today indicates its growing desperation," said a statement from the anti-government People's Democratic Reform Committee, which has been leading the protests. The group and its sympathizers say the decree is illegal and have threatened to go to court to invalidate it.

Thailand's conservative court system is widely seen as being biased against the current government, with the possibility that it could carry out a "judicial coup" to oust Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra on the basis of one of several lawsuits.

Science & Technology

Secure photo sharing for day care users

By STEVE ALEXANDER
STAR TRIBUNE (MINNEAPOLIS)

QUESTION: Because I've had problems with Google's Picasa service, I need to find an easier, more reliable way to privately share photos with my day care's client families. ... The service does not need to be free.—Michael Kauper, Minneapolis

ANSWER: I suggest you set up an account through Dropbox, which lets you store up to 2 gigabytes of data for free, with more storage available for a fee. Once you download the Dropbox program to your PC, create an online file folder for each child's photos. To create a link to a folder, right-click it and choose "Share Dropbox link." Create an email to that child's parents and "paste" the link into it.

By clicking on the link, the parents will be able to see only the photos in that folder, and

they don't need the Dropbox software. You can also arrange it so that all the parents can see all the children by putting all the photos in one folder.

Q: A recent *Star Tribune* article said that that National Security Agency hacked computers in other countries by planting miniature wireless circuit boards that transmit data via radio. ... NSA said it doesn't use these devices domestically, but should I be afraid?—Chuck Behling, Coon Rapids, Minn.

A: It's difficult to know what to be afraid of when the government routinely spies on our Internet and telephone communications. But I doubt that it would be cost-effective for the government to plant an advanced radio transmitter on all of our PCs. Most of us aren't that important to the government.

Q: I have an iPad, an iPod Touch, a Nook e-reader and a

Samsung camera, each with its own charger. The chargers are similar but have slightly different electrical output. Can I use the same charger for all these devices? And, when traveling abroad, do I need a transformer or just a plug adapter to charge the devices?—Lorenzo Freccia, The Villages, Fla.

A: These devices operate on minimal electrical current, so even a small difference in output from a charger could have serious consequences. While the iPad and iPod Touch can share charger cords and wall plugs, the other gadgets should be used with their own chargers. Outside the United States, use a transformer (or converter) to adjust the local current and plug adapters for the local electrical outlets.

Steve Alexander covers technology for the Minneapolis Star Tribune.

Off The Wall

Bunny on Mandela statue causes stir

JOHANNESBURG (AP)—A new, 9-meter (29.5-foot) sculpture of Nelson Mandela is billed as the biggest statue of the South African leader. It also has a tiny, barely visible quirk: a sculpted rabbit tucked inside one of the bronze ears.

South African officials want the miniature bunny removed from the statue, which was unveiled outside the government complex in Pretoria, the capital, on Dec. 16, a day after Mandela's funeral. The department of arts and culture said it didn't know the two sculptors, Andre Prinsloo and Ruhan Janse van Vuuren, had added a rabbit, said to be a discreet signature on their work.

The bronze rabbit, sitting on its haunches with one floppy ear, is about half the height of the ear canal.

"It doesn't belong there," said Mogomotsi Mogodiri, a department spokesman. "The statue represents what everyone in South Africa is proud of."

His department said in a statement that there are discussions on "how best to retain the integrity of the sculpture without causing any damage or disfigurement."



In this photo taken Wednesday, Jan. 16, 2014 a new, 9-meter (29.5-foot) sculpture of Nelson Mandela, with a barely visible sculpted rabbit tucked inside one of the bronze ears.

Pa. couple advertises home as 'slightly haunted'

DUNMORE, Pa. (AP)—Between the mysteriously banging doors, the odd noises coming from the basement, and the persistent feeling that someone is standing behind them, homeowners Gregory and Sandi Leeson are thoroughly creeped out by their 113-year-old Victorian.

So when they put the house in northeastern Pennsylvania up for sale last month, they advertised it as "slightly haunted."

Then things got REALLY weird.

There were calls from ghost hunters. An open house at-

tracted lots of curiosity seekers, but no legitimate buyers. And a former resident came out of the woodwork to tell the couple that when he was a kid, he found a human skull in the basement—the same basement whose door Sandi Leeson once barricaded because she swore she could hear the clicking of a cigarette lighter emanating from the subterranean depths.

It's enough to make her husband wonder whether he did the right thing when he playfully wrote about the home's spooky charms:

"Slightly haunted. Nothing se-

rious, though," says the listing on Zillow's real-estate site. It goes on to describe 3:13 a.m. screams and "the occasional ghastly visage" in the bathroom mirror.

The listing attracted local and national media attention. Now the Leesons just need an actual buyer for the four-bedroom home, on the market for \$144,000.

Science Matters

Two unknown, dark ... things

Modern physics is facing a deep, frustrating question: What are the mysterious things called dark matter and dark energy, and are they two aspects of one thing?

What the universe is made of

68%

27%

0.3% Neutrinos

0.5% Stars

4% Hydrogen and helium gas

0.03% Heavier elements

NOTE: Total does not equal 100 percent due to rounding

Dark energy

Dark matter

Galaxies pose two riddles:

1 Their visible stars do not have enough gravity to keep them from flying apart

2 Stars at the edge should circle more slowly than those in the center – but do not

A huge, invisible mass must be there

1 The universe began expanding with the Big Bang 13.8 billion years ago

2 Astronomers observe that its expansion is now accelerating

3 Gravity should have slowed the acceleration – but it has not

Only a huge, unknown power could be the cause

But isn't matter a form of energy?

$E = mc^2$

Einstein discovered that matter can be converted to energy and vice versa

Physicists today cannot say how dark energy and dark matter are related

A nuclear bomb converts uranium or plutonium into energy

Source: NASA. U.S. Energy Department
Graphic: Helen Lee McComas

© 2014 MCT



TWIN TOILETS

This photo taken on Friday Jan. 17, 2014, shows two toilets at the cross-country skiing and biathlon center for next month's Olympics in Sochi, Russia. Although two toilets and only one stall like this are not common in Russia, social media users have responded by posting other pictures of toilets standing side by side. One said this was standard at Russian soccer stadiums.

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I, FRANKENSTEIN 3D [CC,DV] (PG-13)	Fri.725 PM
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DEVIL'S DUE [CC,DV] (NR)	Fri.(510 PM) 735 PM 1000 PM
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Mon. - Wed.(510 PM) 735 PM	Thu.(505 PM) 730 PM
JACK RYAN: SHADOW RECRUIT [CC,DV] (NR)	Fri.(420 PM) 720 PM 1020 PM
Sat.(120 PM) 420 PM 720 PM	Sun.(120 PM) 420 PM 720 PM
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RIDE ALONG [CC,DV] (PG-13)	Fri.(520 PM) 750 PM 1025 PM
Sat.(1220 PM) 245 PM 750 PM	Sun.(1220 PM) 245 PM 750 PM
Mon. - Wed.(520 PM) 750 PM	Thu.(515 PM) 745 PM
THE NUT JOB [CC,DV] (NR)	Fri.710 PM 930 PM
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Mon. - Wed.710 PM	Thu.705 PM
THE NUT JOB 3D [CC,DV] (NR)	Fri.(500 PM)
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LONE SURVIVOR [CC,DV] (R)	Fri.(405 PM) 705 PM 1010 PM
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Mon. - Wed.(405 PM) 705 PM	Thu.(400 PM) 700 PM
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THE LEGEND OF HERCULES 3D [CC,DV] (PG-13)	Fri.740 PM
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Life & Style

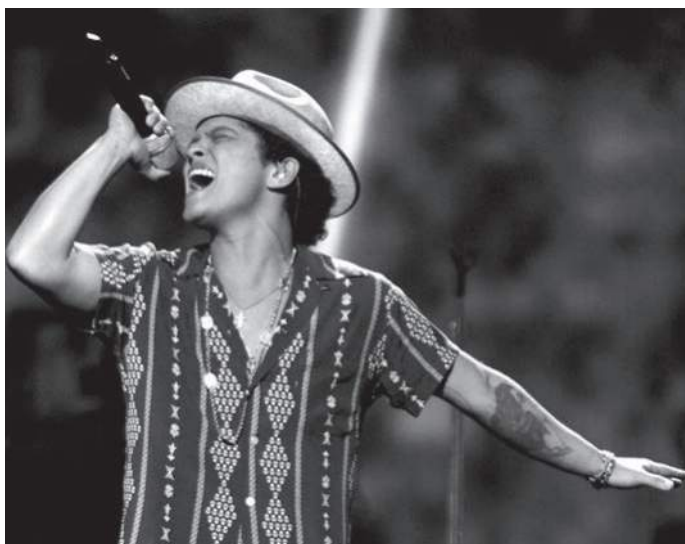
Before Super Bowl, Bruno Mars heads to Grammys

NEW YORK (AP)—Wish Bruno Mars would write you a hit song? Keep dreaming.

The singer-songwriter-producer, who has penned hits like CeeLo Green's "Forget You!" and B.o.B's "Nothin' on You," says he's not interested in churning out tracks for other artists like he's done in the past.

"There's a piece of me that's no longer there—which was basically let me write a song and then sell it," Mars said in a recent interview. "That was back in the day when I was struggling and hustling to pay rent. I was selling songs for 250 bucks ... but now that I'm OK, I shouldn't treat it like a sport."

The 28-year-old, who is one-third of the production trio The Smeezingtons, has produced for Alicia Keys, Justin Bieber, Lil Wayne and Flo Rida. Mars said he now wants to collaborate organically with others—much like on his latest album,



AP
In this Sept. 21, 2013 file photo, Bruno Mars performs at iHeartRadio Music Festival in Las Vegas.

"Unorthodox Jukebox," which is nominated for four honors at Sunday's Grammy Awards in Los Angeles. His sophomore effort, released in late 2012, features Mark Ronson, Jeff Bhasker, Diplo and Paul Epworth. The album's lead single and No. 1 hit, "Locked Out of Heaven," is

nominated for song and record of the year.

He said the upbeat jam took "months and months" to create.

"People didn't see us going at each other's throats in the studio and pulling out our hair for a song like 'Locked Out of Heaven,'" he said. "Trying to

get these drums right and figure out a base line. ... It being recognized in these monster categories is an extreme honor."

The crooner's other No. 1 hit, "When I Was Your Man," is nominated for best pop solo performance, while his near-double platinum album is up for best pop vocal album.

This year marks Mars' fourth nomination for record of the year; this is his third for song of the year. He won his first and only Grammy for best male pop vocal performance with "Just the Way You Are" in 2011.

Though his debut, "Doo-Wops & Hooligans," earned a nomination for album of the year, Mars said he's not disappointed "Unorthodox Jukebox" isn't competing for the top prize this year.

"I'm good, man," he said with a laugh. "If I would have asked for anything more, I'd be a jerk. I'm happy."

The singer, who was named Billboard's top artist last year and will perform at the Super Bowl halftime show on Feb. 2, will launch a tour April 18 in Honolulu. He said he isn't recording new music at the moment.

"Nope. Nothing. I'm tapped out," he said. "Of course melodies come into my head and chord changes come in, but honestly I've just been enjoying this right now."

Valerie Plame has insider's take on 'Homeland'

PASADENA, Calif. (AP)—Former CIA operative Valerie Plame has a mixed opinion of Showtime's spy drama "Homeland."

Plame said Wednesday the Emmy Award-winning TV series is a compelling drama and that star Claire Danes is "fabulous" as a CIA operations officer.

But Plame told a TV critics' meeting it's not credible that the character's bipolar disorder would go unnoticed. She says the depiction of cellphone use inside CIA headquarters is another gaffe, since the phones are not secure and can be traced.

Plame left the CIA after her covert identity was compromised by information leaked to a newspaper columnist in 2003. She is among those featured in the PBS documentary series "Makers: Women Who Make America," airing later this year.



Plame

Elton John challenges new Russian anti-gay law

NEW YORK (AP)—Entertainer-songwriter Elton John is declaring his support of the Russian people, and he says they still accept him despite that country's harsh new anti-gay law.

Passed last year, the so-called "gay propaganda" law bans promotion of "non-traditional sexual relations" to minors.

John said Wednesday that he visited Russia in December

concerned that the new law would affect how he was treated as "an openly gay foreigner." He says he received a warm welcome.

But if foreign visitors are unaffected by the law, John says it has legitimized "vicious homophobia" against gay Russians.



John

John calls the legislation "deeply dangerous" to the gay and lesbian community, and "deeply divisive" to Russian society.

He volunteered to introduce Russian President Vladimir Putin to gay Russians to help promote understanding.

Script in the works for possible new Cosby sitcom

NEW YORK (AP)—NBC is confirming that Bill Cosby is developing a possible new sitcom he would star in.

The deal brings the 76-year-old entertainer together with a writing staff to create a script for a comedy that casts Cosby as the patriarch of a mul-



Cosby

tigenerational family.

An NBC spokesman said Wednesday that, as yet, there is no series order, nor even a deal to produce a pilot episode.

Cosby's greatest TV triumph began at NBC three decades ago, when "The Cosby Show" launched

in September 1984. It ran for eight seasons.

Less successful was "Cosby," another sitcom that aired on CBS for four seasons starting in 1996.

His latest TV venture is "Bill Cosby: Far From Finished," a stand-up comedy special that premiered on Comedy Central in November.

Cosby's new project was first reported by Deadline Hollywood.

Jennifer Hudson to headline Carnival cruise shows

NEW YORK (AP)—Back when she was a nobody, long before she blasted to stardom on "American Idol" and "Dreamgirls," Jennifer Hudson sang on a cruise ship. And on Wednesday, the singer said she would do it again—this time as the headliner for a new concert series on Carnival Cruise Lines called Carnival Live.

"I used to work on a cruise ship, a long time ago," said Hudson before performing at a Carnival news conference in midtown Manhattan. "That's what I did before I did 'American Idol.'"

Her stint aboard a Disney cruise ship was "my test," she said. "Two days later, I went

in and auditioned for 'American Idol.'"

Headlining the Carnival series "is like a full circle," she added.

Hudson is scheduled to perform June 18 on Carnival Ecstasy and June 19 on Carnival Breeze, both in Cozumel, Mexico.

Carnival has struggled to restore its image after three ships broke down last year. Images of passengers stranded at sea, ships towed back to port and trip cancellations created a torrent of bad publicity for the company that depressed ticket prices and revenue.

Other performers and bands scheduled to perform are Chica-

go, Daughtry, Foreigner, Gavin DeGraw, Jewel, Kansas, Lady Antebellum, LeAnn Rimes, Martina McBride, Olivia Newton-John, REO Speedwagon, STYX and Trace Adkins.

So far 49 shows are confirmed for the year. Styx will kick off the series with an April 7 show on the Fantasy in Nassau. In all, eight ships are participating.

Tickets will only be sold to individuals taking the cruise.

Hudson sang "One Night Only" and several other songs for about 200 people at the Cutting Room, a Manhattan performance space, where Carnival's senior vice president of guest operations, Mark Tamis, announced the program.

Not asking for bride's hand is poor first step for groom

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: My boyfriend, "Chad," proposed two months ago, but he didn't ask my parents for my hand in marriage. My parents are upset about it.

When I realized that Chad hadn't gone to them, I asked him why. He said he was following what his father had done—proposing first and then speaking to the parents. But Chad still hasn't done it. In fact, he has yet to be around them at all.

How do I get my boyfriend to speak to my parents? They are no longer as angry as they were, but they still would like to talk to him. I spend lots of time with Chad's family, but I can't get him to even go to lunch with mine.

Dad said that if Chad doesn't clear the air with him, he may not bother showing up at our wedding! What do I do, Abby?

FIANCEE IN A FIX

DEAR FIANCEE: You appear to be quite young. If I were you, I would take a step backward and see this from your parents' point of view. It appears that Chad wasn't entirely honest with you when he gave his reason for not talking to them. Could he be intimidated?

When a daughter marries, most parents want to know something about the young man—not only where he has been, but also what are his plans for the future, including where the two of you will be living and whether he has a job. That Chad is hiding from them isn't a good sign.

When most couples become engaged, the parents of the bride and groom usually get together and start to form a relationship. If your father hasn't met your fiancé, it makes it harder for your parents to reach out to him. When the in-laws are friendly, it makes for a more harmonious marriage.

As it stands, it appears Chad is not interested in having any relationship with your family. Frankly, I can't blame your father for being upset about it.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: My wife and I disagree on whether to tell our kids and friends how we met. When my wife and I met, she was underage. She was 16 and I was 21. We fell in love; it was true love. We have been together for 24 years. We have two beautiful children and have made a wonderful life together. I love her as much today as the first time I met her.

How should we answer people when they ask about how we met and fell in love? I know it was wrong and against the law.

MIKE IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR MIKE: You do not have to quote chapter and verse when someone asks a question. In a case like yours, you could say that you met when you were both quite young without going into the specifics.

For a 21-year-old to SEE a 16-year-old girl is not against the law, as long as her parents approve and they are not having sex. The laws regarding statutory rape were enacted to prevent predators from preying on minors.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: When I buy a sweater I usually get an extra button in a little clear baggie attached to the garment. Today, I bought a sweater with a piece of matching thread in the tiny plastic bag.

Why do manufacturers insist on adding something to every article of clothing even if it is just a piece of thread?

INQUISITIVE IN ILLINOIS

DEAR INQUISITIVE: The thread is provided in case the garment needs to be rewoven in the event you get a hole in it or a tear. It's a courtesy to the customer, so stop looking a gift horse in the mouth.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

Garfield®

By Jim Davis



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Position Requirement: Bachelor's degree in Business Administration or related field and a certificate in gaming operations plus demonstrated experience & ability in managing an e-gaming operation, evidenced by several years managing live table games or e-gaming machines operation or several years of successful work experience in one or more gaming operations and must be computer literate; ability to communicate effectively with guests, team members and management in both written and verbal form and the ability to handle multiple tasks; Knowledge and experience in strategic planning; marketing, brand reinforcement; networking, stakeholder communication; financial management, forecasting, budgeting; team building and development; staff management, mentoring and motivation; organizational, coordination and time management; complete all documentation accurately in accordance with standards and applicable local and federal laws. Ability to work any shift or hours including evenings, holidays, and weekends; highly motivated, organized, outgoing, with excellent leadership skills.

Compensation: Salary rate to be commensurate with qualification, work experience, and ability to perform.

Job Location: Saipan and at all offices or e-gaming/digital gaming lounges of the corporation.

Application: Applications may be obtained from the Mita Travel, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan. Deadline for submission of completed applications is January 24, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.



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COMPENSATION: This position is exempt from civil service. The salary will be \$18,500 annually.

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- One (1) Information technologist – A bachelor's Degree in Computer Science with in-depth knowledge and experience in a variety of computer systems and technologies with emphasis on VB.Net, Visual Basic, HTML, Php strong SQL, PLSQL script skills. Strong skills in database administration with emphasis on DNS, RAID, volume management and many more. Must have experience in Microsoft Dynamics AX ERP and others will be asked during the interview.
- One (1) Team leader – Must have the ability to communicate, trust, respect, acceptance to the nature of the job. Must have the experience in AX system cash register, good in numbers and can be able to read and write in English. Good attendance is a must and can be flexible with schedules. Must be a trainer and be able to carry out the policies and procedures.
- One (1) Accountant – A bachelor's Degree in Accounting or Business Administration required. At least five years of responsible professional accounting experiences. Must be able to deal with Budget and Financial analysis and projection techniques, knowledge in Auditing principles and practices. Can be able to work independently without general supervision. Must have cooperative working relationships with superior and associates as well. Must be able to prepare monthly, yearly financial statement, monitor and maintain appropriate bank balances, reconcile bank statement, analysis cost, inventory, gain & loss, fees, payment. Must know accounts payable, account receivable and excellent in computer knowledge such as window excel/word. And must be professionally to operate Microsoft Dynamic AX – R2 and Quickbooks.

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Green, Suns race past Pacers, 124-100



PHOENIX (AP)—The team with the NBA's best record had its worst game of the season Wednesday night.

The Phoenix Suns simply ran the Indiana Pacers and their vaunted defense off the court, 124-100.

It was the most points allowed by the Pacers this season and matched their most one-sided loss.

The Suns snapped Indiana's five-game winning streak but was no cause for alarm, the Pacers' George Hill said.

"We spoil you guys with great defense," he said, "so when you do have a bad game you think the world is going to end."

The surprising Suns won their 24th game, one fewer than they did all of last season.

"Heck of an offensive performance by the Phoenix Suns," Indiana coach Frank Vogel said. "Their shot-making was off the charts."

Gerald Green led the Suns with 23 points against his former team, not that it meant anything that special. Green's had a lot of former teams.

"This is my seventh team, man," he said. "I've been down this road before."

Indiana has the league's best record (33-8) and is the NBA leader in scoring defense and field goal percentage defense. But the Pacers were on their heels from the start.

"We knew they were going to come out with a lot of energy and play with a lot of energy," Indiana's Paul George said. "We just did a terrible job of responding to it. They just caught fire and once one of them fell, they all had that confidence to keep shooting."

Goran Dragic scored 21, Markieff Morris 20, P.J. Tucker 13, Miles Plumlee 11 and Channing Frye 10 for the Suns.

George scored 26, Hill 16 and David West 13 for Indiana.

Phoenix scored 62 points in each half, the most allowed by the Pacers in any half this season.

"We should play like that every game," Dragic said. "We should play like that against everybody, even if they are last in the standings."

Phoenix led by 13 at the half, as many as 24 in the third quarter and 26 in the fourth.

Green and Plumlee came to the Suns along with a first-round draft pick in a trade that sent Luis Scola to Indiana in the offseason. Scola scored five on Wednesday night.

The Suns shot 54 percent, including 11 of 16 from 3-point range. The Pacers committed 21 turnovers, resulting in 27 Phoenix points. The Suns had 10 turnovers for 10 Indiana points.

The Suns led 62-49 at the break.

The onslaught started when Phoenix opened the second quarter with a 14-2 run that put the Suns ahead 44-31. Frye and Green each sank a 3 in the surge.

The Pacers, having trouble with some the Suns' best offensive pressure of the season, never got closer than nine the rest of the half.

Tucker's 3-pointer from the corner put Phoenix ahead 59-45, then Dragic made one of two free throws and it was 60-45. George sank a jumper, then with 9.8 seconds left, Dragic made an 18-footer and the Suns were up 62-47. George's step-back 21 footer at the buzzer cut it to 62-49. Green scored 18 in the first half, George 14.

The Suns turned it up a notch to start



Phoenix Suns' Gerald Green shouts in celebration after scoring against the Indiana Pacers during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Wednesday, Jan. 22, 2014, in Phoenix.

the second half, opening with a 10-2 run to lead 72-51 on Tucker's basket. When Dragic sank a 3 moments later, Phoenix led 79-55 with 7:12 left in the third quarter. The Suns led 96-79 entering the fourth.

"I thought our guys really focused at the start of the third quarter to really build that lead, rather than let them come right back in the game," Suns coach Jeff Hornacek said.

The Pacers scored the first four points of the final quarter to make it 96-83, but Ish Smith scored on a drive, Morris sank consecutive 3s and Phoenix led 105-83 in one of the most raucous environments at US Airways Center this season.

With 6:06 to go, Vogel raised the white flag, emptying his bench with his team trailing 109-83.

Bulls 98, Cavaliers 87

In Cleveland, D.J. Augustin scored 27 points in a start for Kirk Hinrich and Taj Gibson matched a career high with 26 filling in for Carlos Boozer as the Chicago Bulls improved to 7-2 since trading Luol Deng with a win over the Cleveland Cavaliers on Wednesday night.

Augustin and Mike Dunleavy hit 3-pointers down the stretch to pace the Bulls, who at 21-20 moved over .500 for the first time since Nov. 22.

Deng went just 2 of 11 from the field in his first game against Chicago. The Bulls dealt the two-time All-Star forward to Cleveland on Jan. 6 for future draft picks.

Kyrie Irving scored 26 to lead Cleveland, which has dropped the first two games of a five-game homestand.

Thunder 111, Spurs 105

In San Antonio, Kevin Durant had 36 points to offset Tony Parker's season-high 37, and the Thunder survived a testy victory over the Spurs for their third win this season over the defending Western Conference champions.

Reggie Jackson had 27 points and Serge Ibaka added 14 points for Oklahoma City (33-10), which reclaimed the West's best record.

Tim Duncan and Boris Diaw scored 14 points each and Duncan added 13 rebounds, but San Antonio (32-10) struggled to overcome the loss of their top defensive stopper, Kawhi Leonard.

Leonard left the game late in the first half after sustaining a non-displaced fracture in his right hand. His status was not yet known.

Hawks 112, Magic 109

In Orlando, Fla., Paul Millsap had 24 points, Jeff Teague added 23 and the Hawks hung on to beat the Magic.

Kings' Gay, Cousins injured

HOUSTON (AP)—Sacramento lost forward Rudy Gay to a left Achilles tendon injury and leading scorer DeMarcus Cousins to left ankle sprain against the Houston Rockets on Wednesday night.

Gay, who tied a career high with 41 points on Tuesday night, was injured midway through the first quarter and limped off the court and to the locker room. Cousins was injured on a hard foul by Patrick Beverley that drew a technical in the second quarter.

Both players missed the rest of the

game and Sacramento lost 119-98.

Kings coach Mike Malone didn't have more information on the injuries after the game and said that they'd know more on Thursday.

"It was a big loss to lose both of those guys in the first half," he said.

Gay, who had four points before he was hurt, entered the game averaging 20.2 points and 6.2 rebounds a game this season. He has started all 21 games since he was traded from Toronto on Dec. 9.

Cousins entered the game averaging 23.1 points and 11.7 rebounds.

Atlanta opened a 19-point lead in the third quarter, but lost it the fourth before coming back to hit six free throws in the final 40 seconds for the win.

Victor Oladipo led Orlando with 24 points. Tobias Harris had 19 points and 12 rebounds, and Jameer Nelson finished with 17 points.

The Magic have lost 12 of 13, and fell to 1-14 this season without starting center Nik Vucevic, who continues to recover from a concussion.

Raptors 93, Mavericks 85

In Toronto, DeMar DeRozan scored a career-high 40 points, Greivis Vasquez had 17 and the Raptors snapped a two-game skid by beating the Mavericks.

Jonas Valanciunas had 12 points and 10 rebounds for the Raptors, who overcame a 21-point, first-quarter deficit.

Monta Ellis had 21 points and Jose Calderon and Brandan Wright each had 13 for Dallas, but the Mavericks hurt themselves with 21 turnovers, including nine in the fourth quarter.

Dallas played without forward Dirk Nowitzki, who got the night off to rest as the Mavericks played for the 11th time in 18 days.

Bobcats 95, Clippers 91

In Charlotte, N.C., Al Jefferson had 24 points and 10 rebounds to lead the Bobcats to their first win over the Clippers in their last seven tries.

The veteran center was 12 of 23 from the field as the Bobcats won for the third time in their last four home games.

Gerald Henderson scored 13 points and put the Bobcats ahead for good with 22.5 seconds left with a dunk off Ramon Sessions' air ball.

Blake Griffin was dominant early on and finished with 27 points, but was 0 for 4 from the field in the fourth quarter. Jamal Crawford had 20 points for the Clippers, who fell to 11-12 on the road.

Celtics 113, Wizards 111, OT

In Washington, Gerald Wallace made a driving layup with 2.5 seconds remaining in overtime and the undermanned Celtics broke a 10-game road losing streak with a win over the Wizards, who wilted yet again in their long and laborious quest to get above .500.

Jeff Green scored a season-high 39 points, including career highs in 3-pointers attempted (16) and made (8), and rookie Phil Pressey added a career-high 20 points for Boston. The Celtics played without Rajon Rondo, Avery Bradley and Jerryd Bayless and blew a 19-point first-half lead

before winning for only the second time in 14 games.

John Wall had 28 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists for his second career triple-double for the Wizards, who haven't won a game to move above .500 since Halloween 2009.

76ers 110, Knicks 106

In New York, Evan Turner scored a career-high 34 points and grabbed 11 rebounds, leading the 76ers to a victory over New York that snapped a three-game skid and sent the Knicks to a fifth straight loss.

Michael Carter-Williams and Thaddeus Young each added 19 points for the 76ers, who won for just the second time in nine games. James Anderson finished with 18 points.

Carmelo Anthony scored 28 points after a slow start for the Knicks, who were at least competitive after losing the previous four by a combined 75 points.

Rockets 119, Kings 98

In Houston, Dwight Howard and James Harden combined for 50 points in just three quarters to help the Rockets cruise to their third straight win.

Howard had 26 points and 13 rebounds and Harden added 24 points with nine assists before the pair went to the bench for the fourth quarter.

The Rockets took the lead midway through the first quarter and didn't trail again. The Kings struggled after losing top scorers Rudy Gay and DeMarcus Cousins to injuries before halftime.

Gay, who tied a career high with 41 points on Tuesday night, injured his left Achilles tendon in the first quarter and Cousins sprained his left ankle in the second.

Derrick Williams scored 22 points with 11 rebounds and Isaiah Thomas added 20 points for the Kings.

Bucks 104, Pistons 101

In Milwaukee, Caron Butler scored 30 points and the Milwaukee Bucks rallied from a 13-point deficit in the third quarter for a victory over Detroit that snapped a nine-game losing streak.

Brandon Knight added 16 points against the team that traded him in the offseason and backup center Miroslav Raduljica had eight points and eight rebounds.

The Bucks trailed 76-63 in the third quarter, largely due to Brandon Jennings, who finished with 30 points.

Josh Smith missed two foul shots with about 5 seconds left, and Rodney Stuckey missed a desperation 3 at the buzzer to tie.

High-spending Yanks add Tanaka for \$155M



NEW YORK (AP)—

The Yankees talked frugality, then reverted to their high-spending ways.

New York capped an offseason spending spree by agreeing Wednesday to a \$155 million, seven-year contract with prized Japanese pitcher Masahiro Tanaka.

Following just the second season in 19 years that didn't include a playoff appearance, the Yankees flexed their economic might and committed \$438 million to four free agents.

Tanaka joined catcher Brian McCann and outfielders Jacoby Ellsbury and Carlos Beltran on a revamped roster missing long-time All-Stars Mariano Rivera, Andy Pettitte and Robinson Cano.

And in addition to the deal with the 25-year-old right-hander, the Yankees must pay a \$20 million posting fee to Tanaka's Japanese club, the Rakuten Golden Eagles.

"Anybody that questioned our commitment to winning is going to have to question themselves," Yankees co-chairman Hank Steinbrenner said during a telephone interview with The Associated Press.

Big league teams had until Friday to reach an agreement with Tanaka, who was 24-0

with a 1.27 ERA last year as the Golden Eagles won the Japan Series title. Arizona, the Chicago Cubs and White Sox, the Los Angeles Dodgers and Houston all said they were among the failed bidders.

Still, the Yankees have ample uncertainty—especially in an AL East where they compete with World Series champion Boston. And especially with a veteran team that saw 21 players go on the disabled list last year.

David Robertson appears set to inherit the closer's role from the retired Rivera, and New York must try to make up the offense lost when Cano left for a \$240 million, 10-year deal with Seattle. Alex Rodriguez is suspended for the entire season and 39-year-old shortstop Derek Jeter has played just 17 games since October 2012.

"I think the entire infield is certainly something that people will focus on," New York general manager Brian Cashman said. "What's Brian Roberts going to be? What's Derek Jeter going to be as he comes back from his injury? What's Mark Teixeira going to be at first base as he comes back from his wrist? Can Kelly Johnson secure and handle on a consistent basis third base?"

New York went 85-77 last year, its worst record since 1992. Attendance and television



Tanaka

ratings dropped.

The pinstriped response was similar to the Yankees' behavior after they missed the playoffs in 2008. They spent \$423.5 million on CC Sabathia, A.J. Burnett and Teixeira, then won their 27th World Series title.

This offseason included big deals for McCann (\$85 million for five years), Ellsbury (\$153 million for seven) and Beltran (\$45 million for three). Combined with agreements to re-sign Hiroki Kuroda and Brendan Ryan, and to add Roberts, Johnson and Matt Thornton, the Yankees' offseason spending on free agents totals \$471 million. Add the posting fee, and the cost was nearly a half-billion dollars.

"There has been criticism of myself and my brother the last couple years that, gee, if our dad was still in charge, we'd be

spending this and spending that and doing whatever it takes to win," Hank Steinbrenner said, referring to late Yankees owner George Steinbrenner.

"He didn't have revenue sharing, at least for most of his time," Hank Steinbrenner added. "That's what these people in the sports media don't seem to get. If it wasn't for revenue sharing, we'd have a payroll of \$300 million a year if we wanted to. So we're doing this despite having to pay all that revenue sharing."

Tanaka replaces the retired Pettitte in the rotation and joins Sabathia, Kuroda and Ivan Nova. David Phelps, Adam Warren, Michael Pineda and Vidal Nuno are in the mix for the No. 5 slot.

Tanaka was 99-35 with a 2.30 ERA in seven seasons with the Golden Eagles, striking out 1,238 in 1315 innings. Yankees official has tracked him since 2007, scouting 15 of his games. They sent an eight-person delegation to meet with him Jan. 8 in Beverly Hills, Calif.

"He's got an assortment of quality pitches. He's fastball, slider, split. Throws a cutter, too," said pitcher coach Larry Rothschild, who attended the session. "He's showed tenacity on the mound. When he got in tougher situations, you could see he dialed it up."

Tanaka's agreement calls for

\$22 million in each of the first six seasons and \$23 million in 2020, and it allows the pitcher to terminate the deal after the 2017 season and become a free agent. He also gets a full no-trade provision.

Tanaka receives a \$35,000 moving allowance, an annual \$100,000 housing allowance to be used in New York or near the team's spring training facility in Tampa, Fla., and an interpreter of the pitcher's choice at an \$85,000 yearly salary. In addition to his own flight to the U.S., Tanaka annually will be provided four first-class round trip tickets between New York and Japan.

Tanaka's deal is the highest for an international free agent and the fifth-largest for a pitcher, trailing only the seven-years deals of the Los Angeles Dodgers' Clayton Kershaw (\$215 million), Detroit's Justin Verlander (\$180 million), Seattle's Felix Hernandez (\$175 million) and CC Sabathia (\$161 million under his original agreement with New York).

His contract boosts the Yankees' payroll for purposes of the luxury tax over \$203 million for 20 players with agreements. Barring trades, there is little chance New York will get under the \$189 million tax threshold.

Yankees managing general partner Hal Steinbrenner had

been saying for two years that getting below the tax threshold in 2014 was a goal, but wouldn't get in the way of fielding a contending team.

New York had great success in the Japanese market when it signed outfielder Hideki Matsui, a star from 2003-09 who was the World Series MVP in his final season in pinstripes. But the Yankees had failures with Hideki Iribu and Kei Igawa, pitchers who never lived up to their potential.

Matsui was part of a video the Yankees created and showed to Tanaka at their pitch meeting.

Tanaka was the first player available under the new agreement between Major League Baseball and Nippon Professional Baseball, which caps posting fees at \$20 million and allows multiple big league teams to negotiate. Under the previous system, in place from December 1998 through last offseason, there was no limit on the bid for negotiating rights and only the team with the top bid could try to sign the player.

"It turned everything in reverse of where it was in the past," Cashman said, "where the posting numbers were extremely high, like players' soccer transfer fees, to obviously a more traditional free-agent circumstance with a much lower transfer fee."

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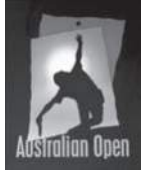
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Li Na, Cibulkova to meet in Australian Open final



M E L - BOURNE, Australia (AP)—When Li Na talks about not tripping up as being the key to converting her third Australian Open final appearance into a major title, she means it literally.

No. 4-seeded Li advanced to her third final in four years at Melbourne Park with a 6-2, 6-4 win over 19-year-old Canadian Eugenie Bouchard on Thursday. No. 20-seeded Cibulkova later trounced 2012 Wimbledon finalist Agnieszka Radwanska 6-1, 6-2 to reach her first Grand Slam final.

Li twisted her ankle and fell over twice before losing the 2013 Australian Open final to Victoria Azarenka. She tumbled to the court after twisting her left ankle in

the second set and twisted the ankle again in the third, falling and hitting her head twice on the court. Obviously, it put her off her game.

"I think is the third time, so pretty close to the trophy," said Li, who also lost the 2011 final here to Kim Clijsters before rebounding five months later to claim her one and only major at the French Open. "Yeah, at least I try to not fall down this time, because last year in the final I think I played well but I only can say I was unlucky. At least I'll try to enjoy and stay healthy."

Li was the only major winner remaining in the semis after Serena Williams lost in the fourth round—where Cibulkova also upset Maria Sharapova in three sets—and Azarenka's 18-match winning streak at Melbourne Park ended in a quarterfinal loss to

Radwanska.

The 31-year-old Chinese star considered quitting the tour after the French Open last year, when she was beaten in the second round. But she decided to play on, and reached the Wimbledon quarterfinals and the U.S. Open semifinals.

After saving a match point in the third round against Lucie Safarova, she is the favorite to finally win an Australian title.

In a women's tournament full of surprising results, Cibulkova's run has been the most dramatic. The diminutive Slovakian has won all but one of her matches in straight sets, including three in one hour or less.

But even Cibulkova was stunned that her first win in a Grand Slam semifinal took only 1 hour and 10 minutes. After Radwanska held in the

third game, Cibulkova won the next eight in a dominating roll. Radwanska won two games back-to-back, but then lost two more to surrender meekly only 24 hours after an impressive win over No. 2-ranked Azarenka.

"When you look at it this way, it is nice for me. I didn't spend so much time on the court," said Cibulkova, who dropped onto her back on the court to celebrate her victory. "I'm in the finals of a Grand Slam - the only three-set match (so far) was against Sharapova. That's something unbelievable."

"I was going into every match, you know, just to play

my game and play well. This is what happened."

Cibulkova had lost her only previous semifinal at a major—at the 2009 French Open—and had lost four of her five previous tour-level matches against Radwanska, including a 6-0, 6-0 defeat in the Sydney final last year.

Touted as the shortest women in the top 50 at 1.61-meters (5-foot-3), Cibulkova has shocked her bigger rivals with the power in her ground strokes.

"It's something inside of me," she said, "I was born with it. It's my gift - that's how I play."

Li raced out to a 5-0 lead in

14 minutes against Bouchard, who had her own personal cheering section, the "Genie Army," serenade her throughout the match.

Bouchard, playing only her fourth Grand Slam tournament, was seeded 30th and just the second Canadian to reach a major semifinal.

"I think maybe she will be best player in the world. But today (I'm) so lucky," said Li, who jokingly apologized to the Genie Army. "Sorry about that. If you guys be happy, I will go home."

Bouchard didn't win a point in her first three service games as she overcame nerves, but caused trouble for Li in the second set.

She said her sudden rise in a major shouldn't be surprising.

"I wouldn't say I exceeded my expectations, but I'm happy with how I did," Bouchard said. "I always want to do better. I've been working hard my whole life to do this ... It's not an overnight thing."

XGA Ace of Aces tomorrow



The Xclusive Golf Association will have its 2013 Ace of Aces Tournament coincide

with its January Ace Tournament tomorrow, Jan. 25, at the Coral Ocean Point Golf Resort.

Showtime is set at 11am and tee time an hour later at 12pm at the Koblerville golf venue. XGA said any interested player who wants to join the association is encouraged to register. The annual membership fee is \$30 and the current member fee is \$25.

For more information about XGA and its upcoming tournaments, call Gerald Guerrero at 285-4153 or Jay Cabrera at 287-9478. (PR)

Unsa hat-trick lifts Wild Bill's to victory

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Youth player Tanapon Unsa scored three goals to power Wild Bill's to a 4-0 win over Kanoa FC in the M-League last Sunday at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

Unsa dropped back-to-back goals in the first half to give Wild Bill's a good start and completed the hat-trick with another goal in the second half. Jack Thoen-saket drilled the other goal for Wild Bill's.

In other results, Korean

Football Association on Saipan notched two wins last week, while Paire Football Club and the Thundercats also prevailed against separate opponents last week.

In a make-up game last Saturday, KFAS downed Inter Godfather's, 3-1. KFAS drew goals from three different players to beat the sluggish Inter Godfather's.

Inter Godfather's bowed to KFAS despite drawing first blood in the weekend match. Jeff Castro put Inter Godfather's in the board with his goal in the



20th, but the team failed to hang on to the shaky lead, as Jun Woo Lee connected the equalizer for KFAS in the 35th minute.

KFAS then grabbed the lead in the 60th minute behind the goal of Ji Sung Cha, while Chong Koo Gil made the insurance in the extended minutes to hand Inter Godfather's back-to-back losses.

Inter Godfather's played Paire last Jan. 15 and also dropped that match. Yosh Gabaldon scored the lone goal in the game to lift Paire FC to the victory. Neither team scored in the first half before Gabaldon found the back of the net in the 58th minute.

Completing last week's winners list were the Thundercats, who walked away with a free win against Sun Palace, which was forced to forfeit last Sunday's second match due to lack of player

SOUTHERN

From Page 32

fumbled.

Agape's quarterback Jomac Manzano picked up the loose ball and Southern was forced to foul him to stop the clock. Manzano made both shots and after Southern muffed a triple on the other end, Agape made another trip to the stripe with Manzano splitting his free throws. Another botched offensive set for the Manta Rays returned possession to the Torchbearers, who sealed the win with a pair of charities from Tao Yang in the last 9.4 seconds of the match.

Yang top-scored for Agape, posting 14 points, while Manzano added 12. Wong led the winless Rays (0-2) with his 10 markers.

In the varsity game, Southern leaned on Emersion Feria to make it to the win column after dropping its first two games.

Feria sizzled for 29 big points and was the lone double figure scorer for Southern. He drilled the Rays' first 14 points in the fourth quarter to keep the team in the lead before drawing help from three teammates in the homestretch.

Feria also recorded the first 5 points of Southern in the open-

ing canto, which ended with Eucon holding a shaky 1-point lead, 13-12, after earning its last 5 points from the foul line. The game remained close at half-time with Allen Yu finishing the first half with back-to-back baskets for Eucon's 34-30 cushion.

Then in the third canto, tables turned with Southern now ahead by a hair, 52-51, after getting a triple from Art Borromeo. Feria was limited to two field goals in the third period, but took over Southern's offense anew in the fourth to give the Rays their first victory of the season.

Varsity Game

SSHS 72 – Feria 29, Javier 8, Palacios 7, Camacho 7, Kintaro 6, Raquero 3, Castro 3, Borromeo 3.

Eucon 66 – Yu 20, Ren 14, R. Wang 13, T. Li 10, W. Li 6, J. Wang 2.

Scoring by quarters: 12-13, 31-34, 52-51, 72-66.

JV Game

Agape 32 – Yang 14, Manzano 12, Ou 6.

SSHS 26 – Wong 10, Park 6, Merante 6, Diyco 2, Bahillo 2, Muna 2.

Scoring by quarters: 9-2, 18-10, 25-18, 32-26.

3 TEAMS

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The Lady Knights, who won their season debut against Saipan Southern High School last Jan. 14, swept Kagman JV in three sets, 25-16, 21-13, 15-6, to take the No. 2 spot in the nine-team field, pending results of yesterday's matches.

The Lady Dolphins and Lady Geckos shared the lead after winning their separate games last Jan. 16 and last Tuesday.

CASTRO

From Page 32

Saipan bikers to make it to the finish line under the four-hour mark. Fellow youth biker Jerome Diyco and veteran biker Butch Sublemente were the two others with the former timing in at 3:35:29 and the latter submitting 3:43:53. Diyco also joined the open division won by Korean Kaon Cho (3:08:29) and the

MHS was pitted against Kagman's varsity team last Jan. 16 and notched the outright win after prevailing in the first two sets, 25-12, 25-14. The Lady Dolphins completed the shut-out victory with a 15-5 triumph in the third set and then gained their third win in as many games after beating MHS JV last Tuesday, 25-11, 25-20, 15-11.

The varsity team of SIS, on the other hand, met two fellow varsity squads, winning over Southern first before outclassing Kagman. The Lady Geckos

dominated the Lady Rays, 25-8, 25-9, 15-5. Against Kagman, SIS eked out a tough 25-23 win in the opening set before getting the automatic win with a 25-17 victory in the second. The Lady Geckos then secured the sweep with a 15-5 thrashing of the Lady Ayuyus in the third set.

In other results, defending champion Grace Christian Academy recovered from a debut loss to MHS Varsity after topping MHS JV last Jan. 16, 25-11, 21-18, 15-4.

In the all-JV battle, SIS edged

Saipan bet finished ninth in his category, ahead of eight others.

Sublemente entered the 40 to 49 age group and took the No. 6 spot behind former Saipan biker Lewie Tenorio (3:19:46), Arthur Guerrero (3:39:25), Rick Leone (3:29:33) Nike Inoue (3:30:16), and Manny Masculino (3:36:59).

Two Saipan bikers joined then 40 to 49 age group with Ben Babauta and Allen Perez

finishing at the No. 19 and No. 21 spots, respectively Babauta clocked in at 4:27:29, while Perez logged 4:42:54. Thirty riders were entered in the 40 to 49 age group, the category that drew the most participants.

In the U19 division, Saipan's Gerald Rangamar clinched first place after recording 4:49:18 and defeating Guam's Ricchan Lin, who tallied 4:51:06.

In the women's division, Su-

Kagman. The Lady Geckos nabbed the automatic win, 25-20, 25-19, while the Lady Ayuyus avoided a shutout after stealing a 15-12 victory in the second set. SIS JV then missed a 2-0 start when it bowed to Southern JV last Tuesday. The Geckos worked out a 26-24 win over Southern in the opening set, while the latter also pulled off a cliffhanger in the second, 26-24. In the deciding third set, the Manta Rays mustered enough strength to sting their foes, 15-13.

san Marchitti joined the 50 to 59 age group and finished ahead of the open division's third placer. Marchitti registered 4:43:40, posting a better time than open division No. 3 finisher Tomoko Okada, who completed the race in 4:45:11. Former Saipan pro Mieke Carey ruled the women's field with her time of 3:20:04 (seventh overall), while Guam's Mylene Garcia came in at second after clocking in at 4:17:07.

Unbeaten Hula Girls clinches championship

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Hula Girls capped its perfect run in the 2013 Sun Palace Christmas Basketball Tournament with a 64-53 title win over Wrecking Balls last Saturday night at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

Hula Girls held Wrecking Balls to 11 points in the first half and shut down Rachel Abrams to set up the double-digit win and complete its domination in the four-team field. Counting its finals victory last weekend, Hula Girls won all its eight games in the Sun Palace caging.

The eventual champion swept the double-round robin preliminary games and then crushed Tappers in the semifinals, 56-17, to gain the first finals berth. Wrecking Balls also whopped Futball, 53-28, in the other semis pairing to arrange the championship showdown between the Top 2 finishers in the preliminary round.

Abrams scored early in Wrecking Balls' semis win against Futball, but in the finals versus Hula Girls, the mobile center was off in the opening 20 minutes of play. Actually, majority of Wrecking Balls



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Hula Girls' Ira Palero pulls up for a baseline jumper against a Tappers defender during their play-off game in the girls division of the Sun Palace caging last Friday at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

players struggled offensively in the first half with only Kaylani Lebría drilling more than one basket for the team.

Irish Pagarao and Jan Travilla outgunned the entire Wrecking Ball crew in the first half, as they scored 7 points apiece and helped Hula Girls take a

22-11 halftime lead.

After a no-show in the first half, Abrams took over for Wrecking Balls in the second half, but Hula Girls countered with successive shots from downtown to keep its safe dis-

tance and foil its foe's comeback bid. Hula Girls connected on nine triples in the second half with Pagarao firing five of them and Travilla adding three. Friendly Joy Pena hit the other triple for Hula Girls.

Pagarao top-scored for Hula Girls with her 22, while Travilla chipped in 16. Mikki Kautz also finished in twin digits with 13.

Hula Girls 64 – Pagarao 22,

Travilla 16, Kautz 13, I. Palero 6, Pena 6, J. Palero 2.

Wrecking Balls 53 – Abrams 22, Ito 10, Williams 10, Reyes 9, Lebría 4.

Scoring by halves: 22-11, 64-53.

Dream Team ends skid, tops Rollers 5

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Dream Team finally made it to the win column after outclassing Rollers 5, 54-45, in the curtain-raiser in the 2013 Sun Palace Christmas Basketball Tournament last Wednesday night at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

Dream Team snapped its seven-game losing skid, while Rollers 5 is still searching for the elusive first win, dropping its ninth straight match.

Joy Pena led Dream Team's first victory, as she scored 17 points. She broke into twin digits early in the first half, nailing 10 markers to give Dream a 24-19 halftime advantage. In the second half, Pena drew help from Irish Pagarao, who knocked in 10 of her 15 markers to ensure Dream Team's 9-point victory.

Two other Dream Team players had double figures against Rollers 5 with Kyla Ito

and Madeleine Alegre contributing 12 and 10, respectively. Rollers 5 got 16 markers each from Emmanuel Cobacha and Aaron Ogumoro.

FTMP 70, Rollers 4 60

In the second game, FTMP had a big second half en route to the 10-point win over Rollers 4.

The victory gave FTMP a two-win lead over Rollers 4, as the former improved to a 5-4 record against the latter's 3-6 slate. FTMP and Rollers 4 are battling for the fourth and last semis spots, as Rollers 1 (8-1), Rollers 3 (8-2), and Rollers 2 (7-3) had already bagged the first three Final Four berths.

FTMP drew double figures from three players to beat Rollers 4. Tristan Montes had 14, while Kautong Omengkar and Dai Lixing chipped in 13 apiece. Montes nailed 12 of his 14 markers in the second half, which started with the opposing teams in a deadlock, 30-all. Omengkar added 6 markers in the second

half, while Lixing scored 8 of FTMP's last 9 points to extend the team's winning run to three.

Rollers 3 65, Rollers 2 63

In the last game of the night, Rollers 3 eked out an overtime win over Rollers 2.

Christian Morales had back-to-back baskets in overtime to help Rollers 3 nip Rollers 2. Kyle Rios also contributed in the extension period, making a triple, while Jethro Cruz and Wilfredo Francisco canned one free throw apiece.

Rollers 2, which led by 10 at the break, 39-29, had a meltdown in the second half and failed to save a win in overtime after nailing only three baskets in the extra period. Mike Espinosa had a triple before fouling out, while Ted Vivero and Kobe Mendoza added one field goal apiece.

With the close win, Rollers 2 moved up to second place behind Rollers 1, while Rollers 2 dropped to third.

First Game

Dream Team 54 – Pena 17, Pagarao 15, Ito 12, Alegre 10.

Rollers 5 45 – Cobacha 16, Ogumoro 16, Yu 9, Alonzo 2, Tengco 2.

Scoring by halves: 24-19, 54-45.

Second Game

FTMP 70 – Montes 14, Omengkar 13, Lixing 13, Aristores 9, Lampkin 6, Francisco 5, Sablan 3, Alcantara 2.

Rollers 4 60 – Kwon 28, El-lama 11, Sagun 7, Iba 3, Espinola 3, Deocares 2, Santos 2.

Scoring by halves: 30-30, 70-60.

Third Game

Rollers 3 65 – Morales 22, Rios 11, Cruz 9, De Luna 7, Factor 6, Francisco 6.

Rollers 2 63 – Espinosa 18, Capuyon 11, Fidelino 10, Mendoza 8, Darag 7, Vivero 4, Cenir 3.

Scoring by halves: 29-39, 56-56, 65-63 (OT).

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Southern, Agape win in MISO caging

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Saipan Southern High School and Agape Christian School barged into the win column in the 2013-2014 Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization Boys Basketball League after downing separate foes last Wednesday night at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

In the varsity match, the Manta Rays snapped a two-game slide after defeating Eucon International School, 72-66, while Agape bounced back from a debut loss to MHS in the freshmen division with a 32-26 victory over Southern.

The Torchbearers hung tough against the Manta Rays in the homestretch, drilling crucial free throws in the closing seconds to withstand the latter's

final rally.

Southern made one last push when Elnathan Wong went for a coast-to-coast layup off a steal, cutting Agape's lead to 3 points, 59.4 seconds left in the game. The Manta Rays then

had a chance to move further after Agape faltered on its offensive set, but instead of pulling up for a shot Wong dished it over to a teammate, who

See SOUTHERN on Page 30



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Agape Christian School's Jomac Manzano drives and draws a foul on Saipan Southern High School's Lawrence Dico during their JV game in the MISO caging last Wednesday night at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

3 teams keep unbeaten records



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

A Saipan Southern High School player bends down for a return during their game against SIS in the MISO volleyball league last week at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Three squads remained undefeated in the 2013-2014 Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization Girls Volleyball League.

Marianas High School and Saipan International School

earned similar 3-0 records after bagging two more wins, while Mount Carmel School improved to a flawless 2-0 mark after downing Kagman High School's junior varsity team last Tuesday night at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

See 3 TEAMS on Page 30

Castro leads Saipan finishers in Tour of Guam

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Seven Saipan bikers completed last Sunday's 2014 Tour of Guam with 15-year-old Erico Castro leading the island's finishers in the 105-kilometer race.

Castro checked in at the 3:29:22 to finish sixth in the open division and 10th overall among nearly 100 riders in the annual race that started and

ended at the Ada's Trust Capitol building in Hagatna and brought runners to the southern and central roads of Guam. His Top 10 finish (both in his division and overall ranking) allowed him to bounce back from a misfortune in last month's Hell of the Marianas Century Race. The youth biker crashed around the last 25K of the 100K race.

Castro was one of the three **See CASTRO on Page 30**



RICKY CASTRO

The seven Saipan bikers pose for a photo at the starting line of last Sunday's Tour of Guam.